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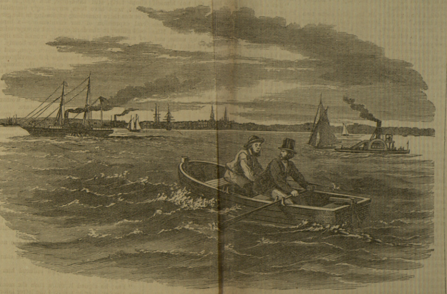

A PULL FOR THE STEAMER.

MY LOVE WITHIN THE VALLEY DWELLS.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

Your love upon the mountain dwells?
 But mine within the valley breathes,
And lightly round her modest brow
 The modest lily wreathes;
'Tis hers to tend the mignonnette,
The primrose and the violet;
These are her nurselings there, and they
Wave every haughty thought away.

II.

Your Love would crown her with the star,
 But mine woos light of dearer birth—
The sacred fire that glows for me
 Upon the household hearth;
There sweetly on my knees I hold
The little white lambs of our fold,
The dear ones that she gave to me
For innocent, mild ministry.

III.

Mine be the lily, yours the rose
 So haughty on the rock above;
Yours be the eagle proud and stern,
 But mine the gentle dove!—
Then kiss me, darling of the vale,
Far from that mountain's stormy gale;
Where silver-throated breezes blow,
Through life with love and peace we'll go!

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THE WRECKED STEAMER.

A TALE OF 1852.

BY P. HAMILTON MYERS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HARLOW ESTATE," "ST. REGIS HALL," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Colonel Mink secured a passage for Miss and Master Walworth in the first steamer for Havana, "consigning" them to a respectable mercantile house there, to be forwarded to Jamaica, by some one of the numerous vessels which ply between those island ports.

There were but a few days for preparation, and Eda was so wild with excitement and joy, that but for the thoughtful aid of her friends, she would have poorly provided herself with comforts for the voyage, notwithstanding the ample means which Mink had placed in her hands.

Yet she did not neglect to provide many things for her father, including some luxuries which were ordinarily beyond his reach. There seemed no end to the money of which she had become the possessor, (though, as she knew, it was but an earnest of what she was yet to receive,) and her constant thought was of the ways in which it could be made to contribute to the benefit of her invalid parent.

The Misses Sibbald, though rejoicing in Eda's good fortune, were pained at the prospect of parting with her, so much had she endeared herself to them during her short abode in their family.

"If Grace could only go with me, my happiness would be complete," said Eda, "and yet I don't know as I ought to wish it, for she would be sure to catch some rich islander for a husband, and then we should lose her altogether."

"That is the precise fate I am fearing for *you*, Eda," said Grace, laughing.

"No, indeed!" replied Miss Walworth, looking very sober, while her bosom was distended by the gentlest of sighs. "I assure you I have no such aspirations."

She spoke earnestly, and then, as if conscious that she was betraying something of the painful memories which had become part of her daily life, she blushed slightly and added:

"But I hope it will not be many months before we shall again meet, and I am sure that if Papa comes back well, and—and can get into business again, that I can persuade him to take a small house in this beautiful city, somewhere near to you, where we can see each other very often."

Eda was so fully occupied that the few days which were to intervene before her departure, seemed to pass very rapidly, notwithstanding her extreme anxiety to see her father. It was arranged that Sally and Grace were to accompany her to the ship, and Miss Mink had agreed to call on the morning of the embarkation, to bid her good-bye, and to bring her the remainder of the promised money.

Miranda was punctual, and the supply of the "material aid" which she brought was liberal, even to profuseness, nor would she listen to any demur from Eda against receiving so much.

"It is really but a trifle to Pa," she said, "and he will scarcely know to-morrow that he has given it. His charities are very large."

The word grated harshly on Eda's ear, but she soothed her wounded pride by the reflection that this great benefaction was in reality conferred upon her father, who, she knew, would consider it a debt to be repaid by his future labors, if his health should be restored. She was relieved to think that she really had no right to decline it.

Yet Eda was surprised that during all these negotiations she had never seen her benefactor, and she was uncertain whether she ought not to call and thank him before leaving the country. But to some suggestions of this nature her visitor instantly replied:

"Oh certainly not! You would not find him at home if you went, and it is not at all necessary."

"If you had considered it proper," said Eda, timidly, "I had thought of starting early, and driving directly to his house, before going to the ship, which does not sail till noon."

"You must not think of such a thing. Besides, the streets are greatly crowded to-day, on account of some celebration. There is to be a great procession, I believe, and you will be fortunate if you can even get across Broadway, and get to the vessel in time."

Miranda staid until Miss Walworth and her friends were ready to start, and when she had shaken hands with Eda through the window of the coach which was to convey her to the ship, she returned to her own carriage, and started for home, crossing to the great city, by a different *ferry from that* by which the travellers were to go. Miss Mink exulted greatly in the success of her father's scheme, being confident that when once she was the wife of Howard Belmont, she could easily ward off exposure in almost any supposable contingency, and that if she could not, it would not greatly mar her happiness.

If ambition was a crime, she thought she shared it in common with a large portion of her sex, and as to the rest, she had but obeyed her father's commands.

She would certainly have been better satisfied not to have had any direct agency in such an achievement; but Colonel Mink had not dared to employ any one else, nor had he been willing to visit Eda in person, lest she should recognize in him one of the throng of anxious visitors who, two years before, had called to inspect the rescued child.

Perhaps he would have been less chary on this point if he had known that Miss Walworth had already seen and recognized him while getting out of his carriage in front of his own house on the day that she had called with the elder Miss Sibbald. But no suspicions had been awakened in her mind, because she had never heard a doubt expressed about young Arthur's death, or as to Colonel Mink's right to the great estate. Nothing, indeed, seemed more natural to her than that he should have been one of those who came to see the advertised foundling, and she had not even mentioned her discovery to Sally, because the latter was always evidently pained by any reference to the great affliction which still weighed heavily upon her heart.

Although guilt is essentially cowardly, Colonel Mink was by no means troubled with any serious appsehensions of exposure; but he liked to "make assurance doubly sure." All that Eda knew, he believed might be divulged without even casting suspicion upon his integrity, yet he felt a little more security in its suppression.

This consideration, as well as his matrimonial scheme, influenced him in sending Miss Walworth out of the country and in his determination that neither she nor her father should again reside in New York, if even a far more lavish expenditure could suffice to keep them away.

By what particular means their continual expatriation was to be effected he had not decided; but that the liberal use of money would accomplish his purpose he did not doubt.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Miss Mink's prediction in regard to the difficulty of driving through the lower part of the city was fully verified.

When Eda's carriage reached Broadway, at the corner of Fulton street, its further progress was impeded by a procession, and by the usual crowd which such a display calls out; and she was compelled to remain for nearly half an hour an impatient witness of the passing pageantry. The President of the Republic was on a visit to the metropolis, and the populace, under the direction of the city authorities, were paying their accustomed ovation to that distinguished functionary.

But if Eda and the Misses Sibbald were at first vexed by the delay, they soon found ample compensation for the slight annoyance in the pleasure which the show gave to Frank, who went nearly wild with delight, and whose noisy demonstrations of joy they were compelled repeatedly to check.

The music, the banners, the uniforms, and, above all, the finely-caparisoned horses, called forth Frank's repeated exclamations; and his little curly head was bobbing incessantly in and out of the carriage window, as he called upon his sister to admire the various objects of interest.

Several Irish societies, with their handsome uniforms and their tasteful national devices, were in the procession; and among the crowd which blockaded the vehicle there were not a few of the sons of Erin, who cheered lustily as these emblems of their nationality went by.

Carried away by his enthusiasm, and by his excessive animal spirits, Frank snatched [illegible] cap from his head, and swinging it out of the window, added his tiny voice to the shouts of the crowd.

"Hare to him there! The youngster," said one, pointing out the boy. "It's a swate lad intirely! The blessings of old Ireland and of St. Paiterick be upon him."

Several of the Irishmen turned and looked at Frank, and at the ladies; and immediately afterwards Eda saw that one of them, who was much better dressed than his companions, was forcing his way through the crowd, and approaching the carriage.

As he came nearer, she was sure that his face looked familiar to her, and she supposed he was some laboring man who had been at some time, temporarily, in the employ of her father. But when he stood at the carriage window, hat in hand, his broad face wreathed in smiles, and the light of joy gleaming from his eyes, she could no longer mistake the good-natured face of Hugh McCann!"

"It's forgotten me, ye have, Miss Wallyworth," he said, not venturing to offer his hand to the lady, but affectionately patting Frank on the head; "but I'm very glad to see you and the boy."

"Why, Hugh! Is it possible?" exclaimed Eda, in glad yet tremulous accents, and instantly seizing his huge hand and shaking it cordially. "How very, very glad I am to see you. This is that brave and faithful servant of Mr. Belmont," she said (in great excitement) to the Misses Sibbald, "of whom you have so often heard me speak, who assisted his master to save our lives, and but for whose help we should probably all have perished."

"Bless her swate lips for saying it!" said Hugh; "but it was little enough that *I* did; and me on a safe raft all the while, while master Howard and the poor childhers were in the water up to their neck. Ah—ah-h! It's well that I remimber that same, ah, ah-h! It was a dreadful time, intirely."

Sally and Grace both shook hands with Hugh, and for a few moments almost every one of the excited party were speaking simultaneously.

"I know him now! I know him!" said Frank. "It's Hughey! It's Hughey! Where's Carl, Hughey? Is Carl here?"

Not giving him time to reply to this question, Eda, with no little signs of agitation, asked:

"But how was it, Hugh, that you did not return to England with Mr. Belmont? I did not suppose you would ever leave such a master."

"Is it lave him, you said? R—return to England! And didn't I do that same, after we had been all over the great per-aries (I belave there's no end to 'em), and had killed hundreds of wild bastes, and had been kilt ourselves by the robbers, which master Howard writ a letter to your father afterwards, tellin' him all about it."

"Oh yes," said Eda, smiling, "I know all about that; but what I want to know is, how you came to leave Mr. Belmont, and to come back to this country?"

"I didn't lave him, sure. He's back hisself! Master Howard has been in New Yerrick these two months!"

Eda turned pale and red by turns at this announcement, and her friends, who could not fail to see the evidence of her agitation, relieved her embarrassment by suddenly finding something very attractive in the procession to engage their attention.

"*Mr. Belmont in New York?*" she exclaimed, chilled by the painful thought that he could have been so long in the city without seeking her. "Is he—is he well, Hugh?"

"Better nor I ever see him in my life is master now, Miss; and he wanted very much to see *your father* when he first came, until he hared that he had gone way off to the East Ingees, and then he gave him up."

"Not the *East* Indies, Hugh. Pa is in the Island of Jamaica, in the West Indies, where I am going to join him. I am to sail this very day, and am now on my way to the ship." She hesitated, and then added, with increasing embarrassment: "I should have been very happy to see Mr. Belmont before I go, but I suppose it is now too late."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Sally; "is that the kind of message to send to your father's friend and the preserver of your own life? See here, my man: Do you hurry to your master, and tell him that Miss Walworth sails to-day at twelve o'clock, in the steamship Bolivar, from the foot of Chambers street, North river. Will you remember that?"

"Yis, ma'am."

"Here, give me a pencil."

Grace quickly handed her one, and a visiting-card from her card-case.

"There: 'Steamship Bolivar, foot Chambers street, 12 o'clock to-day.' He'll understand that. Give him that, and tell him that she would be most happy to see him before she goes."

"Oh, Sally, I cannot send such word as that?" exclaimed Eda.

"Nonsense! not to your assured friend and the preserver of your life? That is a mistaken modesty, Eda; and let me tell you, my child, that an undue reserve becomes itself sometimes indelicate, in what it implies."

Eda blushed deeply, and said:

"Very well—as you think best;" and then she added aside to Sally: "I have not the slightest reason for regarding Mr. Belmont in any other light than as a friend and benefactor."

"Then the message is certainly most proper. Go quickly now, Hugh; and as you will have to abandon your own pleasures, you must allow me——"

"Divil a bit, ma'am! begging your pardon that I should say so to a leddy. Put up your pocky-book—I'll not take a rid cint."

"There are nearly two hours yet to twelve," said Sally, looking at the clock on St. Paul's; "and if you know where to find Mr. Belmont——"

"That's it, ma'am. I don't; but I'll try;" and then turning to Eda, he said, in a lower voice: "You see, Miss, he's very busy about these days, because—because—perhaps I ought not to say it; but you're goin' out of the country, and you're his particular friend, and the long and short of it is, I think, he is about bein'—bein' married."

Eda started perceptibly now and became very pale, yet compelling a calm demeanor, she said with a smile:

"Is it possible, Hugh?"

"Oh yis, mim, indade, and to a very rich leddy—worth millions and millions. He's wid her most every day ridin' and drivin', and that's why I don't think I'll find him in time. But I must hurry now. Good-bye and may the saints presarve ye."

Eda's emotion was very great; but she was with true friends who would not seem to observe the agitation she sought to conceal, and the still passing procession furnished an opportunity for a ready change of the topic of conversation. Very soon, too, the crowd dispersed, and the released carriage pursued its way to the ship, where, after the baggage had been transferred to the vessel, it was dismissed, for Sally and Grace had resolved to remain with their friend until the hour of sailing.

"Only if *he* comes, Eda," said Sally, laughing, "we shall have very urgent business that will call us home, and we shall go directly after having one good look at him."

"I shall see that you do no such foolish thing," replied Eda. "If Mr. Belmont comes it will only be to send some kind messages to my father; but I do not think we shall see him at all."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

If Mr. Belmont's attentions to Miss Mink had not been sufficiently marked to justify the inference which Hugh McCann, in common with many other people, had drawn, they certainly did not fall much short of that point. His intimacy with the family had gradually increased, and step by step he had become involved in so many semi-confidential relations with Miranda, that he probably would not have felt at liberty to recede from the delicate "entanglement" into which he had been drawn, even if he had desired so to do. Having gone so far, there was an implied obligation upon him to go further, and the momentous step which he was thus forced to contemplate he certainly did not regard with repugnance.

He well knew that he had no strong attachment for Miss Mink, and he believed that the only being who could have aroused his torpid heart to its full capacity for deep and passionate love, was lost to him forever, through his own folly and blindness. But he was interested in Miranda, she seemed to him upright, amiable, and affectionate, and he believed her fitted to adorn the station which, as his wife, she would be called to fill.

Then, although no one could be less of a fortune hunter than Howard, the very generosity of his nature prevented the vast fortune of Miss Mink from being an object of indifference to him.

What a gratification would it be to him to redeem the lost patrimony of Lord Belmont, his erring but beloved brother,—to recall him from his self-imposed exile, and reinstate him in all the hereditary state and grandeur, which, in their boyish days, their father had enjoyed.

Himself the substituted creditor, how light would he make the galling chain of debt; how would he diffuse its payment over long years, and restore to the young baron all the substantial benefit of ownership and possession, consistent still with a full regard to the rights of his New World wife, who he fancied emulating him in zeal to restore the lost honors of his ancient family.

His heart leapt in view of this dazzling picture, which he scarcely dared to contemplate, lest it should induce him to feign or to imagine a love for the fair heiress, beyond what he really felt. For he had resolved to be perfectly frank with Miranda, who he was determined should not accept him without a knowledge that his heart as yet owned a divided fealty.

With Colonel Mink he [illegible] be equally candid. His English notions of marriage contracts, required the fullest ante-nuptial settlement of all pecuniary questions connected with them, and before the mystic knot was tied, he expected voluminous legal documents to fix both his wife's dowry and her jointure.

That both Col. Mink and his daughter stood ready to accede to all his reasonable demands on this score, he was well convinced, and he was himself resolved scrupulously to protect the monetary interests of a confiding woman, towards whom he could not but be conscious of a defective love.

Unfortunately, when Miss Sibbald's messenger, Hugh McCann, who was no Mercury in his movements, set out in search of his master, that gentleman was absent from his hotel, nor had he left any clew to his whereabouts.

When Hugh had learned thus much, and had reflected that it was far too early in the day for him to be at Col. Mink's, he started forth to look for him amid the multitudes that thronged Broadway, and he spent nearly an hour in the search, before he became impressed with a sense of its utter uselessness.

He then returned to the hotel, where, to his chagrin, he learned that Mr. Belmont had been in, and had again gone out, during his fruitless search for him.

Hugh now did what he ought in the first place to have done, he remained in Howard's room, and patiently awaited his return, watching for him at the same time from one of the windows which overlooked Broadway. He believed he would not be long absent, for his writing desk was open and covered with papers, and Carl was lying asleep beside it.

"If the dumb brute could only spake now!" said Hugh, whose anxiety became intense as he saw that the mantel clock indicated nearly half-past eleven. "Where is the masther, Carl, hey?"

But the dog replied only by beating a "tatoo" on the floor with his tail, and the Irishman began seriously contemplating running down to the ship and asking the captain to "hould on" for another hour. He might leave the "bit o' paper," he thought, on Belmont's desk, and he did not doubt that it would tell the whole story. But a little reflection saved Hugh from this second blunder, and after more than another quarter of an hour's suspense, he heard the welcome step of his master on the stairs. He rushed out to meet him, and thrusting Miss Sibbald's card into his hands, he said:

"Read it quick now, or ye'll be too late."

"Why, what's this, Hugh! This is nothing that I am interested in. This is the card of Miss Grace Sibbald, a very pretty name, but one that I never heard before."

"Turn it over then. It's on the other side."

Howard complied and read:

"'*Steamship Bolivar, foot of Chambers street, North River—twelve o'clock to-day.*' Here is some mistake. This is not meant for me."

"Isn't Miss Wallyworth in it?"

"Miss Walworth! no! What do you mean? Speak quickly, you stupid fellow!"

The now disconcerted Hugh replied quickly, but not with increased precision:

"It's herself that's in it, sure, and the little brother that was drownded with her. They're both on that ship there, and they'll be afther bein' in the East Ingees while ye're standin' here. It sails in ten minutes."

"Run for a hack, then! you'll find them just opposite," said Howard, and he himself ran down stairs ahead of his servant, and did not abate his speed until, side by side with Hugh, he reached the carriage stand.

"Any of them!" he said. "Here, this!" himself opening one and springing in. "Jump in, Hugh!"

"Is it inside I'll git?" asked Hugh, hesitating.

"Yes—yes—quick now! To the foot of

Chambers street, driver! The steamship Bolivar! and a sovereign for you if you get us there in time. The vessel may not be punctual to her hour," he continued to Hugh, "though I believe these steamships usually are. Now, tell me all about it, Hugh. Where did you meet her? What message did she send, and was her—her husband with her?"

Howard's air, although betraying some agitation, by no means evinced a joyous excitement. He was really anxious, indeed, to see the beautiful girl once more whose image had so long haunted his memory, although he did not doubt the interview must be a painful one to him.

Hugh told his brief story as lucidly as was possible for him, and at the close of it Belmont asked him again—"Was her husband with her? And what kind of a man was he?"

"He wasn't with her at all. Perhaps he'd gone on to the ship ahead iv 'em."

"It isn't probable that he is going with her to Jamaica, if he is a man of business; but I should suppose he would at least see her embark. What did the other ladies call her? Mrs. what?"

"Just Edy, sir! nothin' else, barrin' I called her Miss Wallyworth myself siveral times, seein' I forgot that she was married."

"And didn't she correct you?"

"Divil a—not at all, beggin' your pardon."

Belmont thought that he had never seen the streets so obstructed before as they were on this memorable morning. Every conceivable variety of vehicle seemed to be in his way, and he looked out in despair upon the wedged and slow moving mass which prevented his hackman from reaching even the nearest cross street and getting out of "the jam." The two opposing currents of stages, hacks, carts and express wagons, mingled with a transverse stream that sought to cross Broadway, came to a dead lock, which the policemen, who flitted busily about amidst it, vainly sought for many minutes to disentangle.

When the mass began again slowly to move, the difficulty was still extreme, to get across and out of Broadway, and but for a lucky thought of Hugh, several additional minutes would have been lost.

"If you've ary a dollar for *him* now," said the Irishman, pointing to the policeman who stood nearest the carriage, and who was beckoning to the docile stage-drivers and indicating their several courses, "he'll put us through."

Acting on this hint, Belmont called the man to his side, and slipping some silver into his hand, he said:

"For Heaven's sake, my friend, make a passage for me into Murray street without delay! my business is most urgent."

The man closed his hand upon the money without reply, and stepped in front of the carriage, making a few signs to the watchful drivers, yet scarcely uttering a word of command to any. Difficulties vanished magically now, and the beleaguered carriage, thus officially piloted, soon emerged into the cross street, although not until the clock on the City Hall had pealed the hour of twelve.

It was of course not a few minutes later when, having crossed to Chambers street, it approached the river, and Howard's forebodings were verified by the answers which he received to his first eager inquiries for the Bolivar:

"She's off, sir!"

"How long has she been gone?"

"She's been lying off in the stream these two hours, sir, and her wheels are just beginning to move. There goes her parting gun, now."

True enough; Howard saw the smoke and flash, and he started at the reverberating roar, which seemed to him like the knell of his departed joys.

But inspired with sudden resolution, and impelled by some such energy as that which, in this very river, two years before, had made him a hero, he sprang from his carriage, and ran to the end of the nearest pier, where a few watermen, who had been plying between the ship and shore, were yet lingering in their boats.

"Quick! to the Bolivar," he said, springing into one.

"It's too late!" said the gaping man; "she's moving."

"No matter—we'll try! Be active now, if you want to earn a day's wages in ten minutes. I take one oar!"

As the two men bent earnestly to their seemingly hopeless task, Hugh, who, having followed close on his master's heels, now stood amazed on the dock, shouted:

"Ye'll git carried off, masther, as sure as ye set fut on her! Kape off her, I tell yees, or ye'll have to go to the East Ingees!"

"Never fear, Hugh;" Belmont called back. "I'll come off with the pilot outside the Hook."

"Outside the Hook! It's outside his sinses he is, I'm thinkin'," muttered Hugh. "Ah, may the saints presarve him from ever gittin' on board, at all, at all."

There did not seem much danger of Howard's reaching the vessel, for although she had lain a few rods farther up the stream than was the pier from which he started, and though she moved but slowly at first, yet she was nearly in the middle of the wide river, and each revolution of the wheels seemed faster than the preceding one. Of course the oarsmen took a diagonal direction down the river, and by dint of the most laborious efforts, (in which the waterman confessed himself outdone by his passenger,)—they succeeded in getting a good offing before the puffing monster came abreast of them.

This was their only chance, and Howard who had his handkerchief ready tied to the handle of his oar, rose and swung it high in the air, shouting loudly as he did so. Some commotion about the pilot house inspired him with hope that he was observed and he at once redoubled his cries, and waved his signal with increased rapidity, when to his unspeakable joy, the great wheels ceased to revolve, and dropping to his seat he again joined the boatman in urging forward their little skiff.

"Its rather an impudent thing to do," he said, laughing, "and no doubt they think they are hailed by some officer of the law, or perhaps by some dilatory passenger. I hope the captain is a good natured fellow, or I shall never be able to pacify him."

Belmont got safely on board and having succeeded in making his peace with the incensed pilot, (the captain needed no propitiation,) he at once proceeded to the cabin in search of Eda.

CHAPTER XL.

Eda had of course entirely abandoned the hope of seeing Howard, and she had come sadly to the conclusion that it was better for her peace of mind that they should not meet. Yet she would have been glad, for her father's sake, to see him, for she knew that it would gratify him to hear directly from so valued a friend. The Misses Sibbald had left her about half an hour prior to the sailing of the ship, having gone ashore in a tug which had brought off a number of the passengers, and she had soon afterwards gone below, not a little depressed in spirit, despite the prospect of a speedy re-union with her beloved parent.

As the weather was fine, and nearly all of the few passengers were on deck, Miss Walworth had no difficulty in finding the quietude and retirement which she longed for, without confining herself to her narrow state-room.

She and Frank were quite alone in one end of the principal cabin when Belmont approached them, and so little did she imagine the possibility of such a visitor now, that she did not look up at the new comer until he stood almost at her side and his voice sounded in her ears.

"Eda!"

"Mr. Belmont!"

Astonished beyond measure, yet more delighted than astonished, and more embarrassed than either, the beautiful girl, with fast mantling blushes, extended her hand to meet that of her friend. Nor was Howard quite self-possessed. Absorbed in admiration, and stung by regrets, he hesitated in what terms to address the lady, whose charms, one glance sufficed to tell him, had even more than fulfilled the bright promises of her girlhood, when Eda herself took the initiative and said:

"I am ashamed to have sent for you, Mr. Belmont, though I was assured that I ought to do so, and I thought it would give papa so great pleasure."

"I should never have forgiven you if you had not," replied Howard, interrupting her; "I have sought long and diligently for your father and you."

"But I fear I have put you to very great inconvenience. I know it must be so," she added, with an anxious look; "and besides, how are you to get off again, since the ship has already started on its voyage?"

"Oh, I shall go off with the pilot some two hours hence," replied Howard, gaily. "Never fear for me; and now, before I say more, will you please to tell me by what name I am to address you, for although I have heard, it has escaped my memory."

"Is it possible that you have forgotton? Eda Walworth."

"Oh, I had not forgotten *that*, but it is your *new* name I ask for, Eda."

Eda looked bewildered for a moment, and then said:

"This is some jest, I presume. I have no other name."

"Are you not married, then?"

Coloring deeply, Miss Walworth replied in the negative; and Howard, with a surprised and pleased look, added:

"I really beg your pardon, but I thought my information quite authentic on this point. I may still call you *Miss*, then, without fear of offence."

Belmont at once proceeded to inquire particularly about Mr. Walworth's health, and an animated conversation of many minutes ensued, during which each party had many questions to ask and answer; while Frank, who had gradually edged nearer to the stranger, with some vague sense of recognition, soon engaged a share of his attention.

Yet Howard's air was abstracted, and he found little cause for felicitation in the discovery that Eda was still single. He could scarcely doubt that she was at least engaged, for Colonel Mink's statement had been too positive to admit of a doubt, that it must have had at least this foundation. But even if she were entirely free, the reflection would now but aggravate his regrets, since his own faith was virtually pledged to Miranda, and he was sure he had no right to trifle with her happiness.

No suspicion of her sincerity and affection, or of her father's probity, had yet entered his mind, yet it was scarcely possible that an hour's conversation with Eda should fail to elicit something to awaken distrust of his new friends, if not to produce conviction of their perfidy.

In response to Howard's earnest yet delicately worded inquiries, Miss Walworth was led to relate most of the important events of her life, during the two preceding years; and if she had been disposed to disguise the poverty to which her father had been reduced, there was one circumstance which forbade its concealment.

She wore neither watch nor jewelry, and it was certainly due to the friend who had bestowed these costly presents upon her, to explain their absence from her person.

"I know," she said, when she had spoken of the necessity which had compelled them to accept a home with their relations in the country: "I know that you will give me credit for not having parted with your gifts, excepting in a real emergency. There were no other available means to enable papa to go south, and—and we only pledged—we did not sell them."

Although Eda tried to touch lightly on these topics, her eyes moistened as she spoke of them and she turned her head aside.

"But may I ask why it was, since you are going to join your father in Jamaica, that you did not rather accompany him there. It can be scarcely two months since he went."

"Franky and I did not go with him, because all the money that we raised was barely sufficient for him alone, and he was able to leave us only a few dollars. Why we are going *now* I will tell you, and in doing so I come to the most wonderful, indeed the only truly wonderful part of my story. First, however, I must tell you why I left my uncle's and came to New York, and some of the incidents which befell me by the way."

Succinctly, yet graphically, did Eda narrate the various facts with which the reader is already familiar, pausing at times to choke down the emotion which impeded her utterance and brought the now unheeded tears into her eyes.

"Poor dear child!" exclaimed Howard, involuntarily, as she paused at that part of her narrative where, after having suffered so many wrongs and cruelties, and after leaving the Police office remediless, she stood alone in the streets of the great city, not daring to look at or accost a fellow-being, lest she should draw some fresh indignity upon her.

"Poor dear child! Surely Heaven must have some blessings in store for thee, in compensation for such sufferings as these!"

Eda buried her face in her kerchief and gave way for a few moments to sobs; but soon subduing her emotion, she resumed her narrative.

It grew brighter colored now; and, as she painted the cordial reception which she met with from the Misses Sibbald and their prompt and generous aid, Belmont found himself sympathizing as fully with her joys as he had with her distress, and inwardly blessing the hospitable friends who had given her shelter and relief.

"Let me remind you here," resumed Eda, "that my father must be kept ignorant of what I have undergone, for I know how deeply a knowledge of it would pain him. If, therefore, you should write to him, please not to allude to these things."

Howard's schooled yet sensitive heart had felt the fascination of Eda's charms even in that season of her comparative childhood when they had first met, and during his years of absence, as we have seen, pleasant memories of her had often regaled his solitary hours; but never had she seemed as lovely to him as at this moment, when not only the full light of her beauty, but all the purity and sweetness of her character were revealed to him.

Such a picture of filial and sisterly love, constant to its unselfish purposes, through trials which might have shaken the sternest heart, and sedulous now only to prevent the knowledge of those sufferings from reaching the loved parent in whose behalf they had been endured, seemed to him something far above and beyond all ordinary attainments in human excellence.

CHAPTER XLI.

While the charmed listener awaited Eda's resumption of her narrative, she continued as follows;

"I have come now to the pleasantest and strangest part of my story. I sought work to enable me to pay for my own and my brother's support, for I was fully determined not to be a burthen upon the kind friends who were so freely sharing their scanty means with me. When they found me resolved on this point, they took me to the house of a very wealthy gentleman, a distant relation of their own,—one Colonel Mink—"

"*Colonel Mink!*" echoed Howard, with such an emphasis, and such a start, as fairly frightened the gentle narrator.

"Yes, sir."

"Of what street, and what number?"

Eda told him with faltering voice, for she was really alarmed at the strange expression on the countenance of her auditor.

"On what day was this?"

"It is just a week ago to-day."

"And I have been there thrice since then," thought Howard, "without hearing aught of it."

"But surely Colonel Mink did not himself know of this, or—or perhaps they did not know your name and history."

"I have not the least idea why you ask these earnest questions," answered Eda; "but Miss Sibbald certainly introduced me by name, and, quite unnecessarily, I thought, related the one great adventure of my life and how I was rescued by you from death."

"By *me!* Did she say *Mr. Belmont?*"

"She did; I remember it well—but the story was not new to them, they said, for they had read it in the newspapers of the day. Col. Mink was not present. I speak now of Mrs. Mink and her daughter Miranda."

"*Miranda!* Did *she* hear this?"

"Yes, sir."

Howard rose and paced the cabin for several minutes in silence—and when he returned to Eda, he said with a voice of singular calmness:

"Please to go on."

"It is little more that I have to tell," resumed Eda; "but that little accounts for my being here to-day. Miss Mink freely promised me the employment which I so much desired, but she said she did not require me at the house, and that she preferred to bring the work to my residence at the Misses Sibbald's."

"Yes—go on!"

"But when she came, on the next day, to my great surprise, and of course greater joy, instead of work, she brought me the intelligence that Col. Mink, sympathizing with my distress, had resolved to offer me the means of at once joining my invalid father in Jamaica."

"*Miranda* brought you this proposition!"

"Yes—and the money."

"And you accepted it? And it is with these means that you are now travelling?"

Eda replied faintly and with a frightened look:

"Yes, sir. Have I done wrong?"

"No—no; *you* have not done wrong. What else could a loving daughter do but accept the means to join an exiled and suffering parent. No, *you*, at least, are all excellence and goodness still. Thank Heaven for that! Thank Heaven for that!"

Again Belmont paced the room for a few minutes with every evidence of emotion, and when he once more returned to Eda, he said:

"Miss Walworth, I have a strange and startling proposition to make to you, and I know that I am presuming much upon your confidence in me when I make it. I am going to ask you to abandon this voyage, and to go back with me to your friends in Brooklyn. I am going to ask you to return to this Judas, by my hands, the money with which he has sealed the evidence of his own and his daughter's perfidy. Will you do this?"

Eda was very much amazed, not only by this request, but by much of the language, enigmatical to her, which accompanied and preceded it. But she promptly replied, though not without a pang of filial regret:

"I will certainly do your bidding, whatever it may be, for I am sure it must be right, and that my father would so desire. But I am really grieved to hear that Colonel Mink's seemingly noble benevolence is not real."

"It is as false as the *mirage* of the desert. He is a vile and treacherous man! and when I reflect how I (who confided implicitly in his honor and that of his family) have been duped by them—how nearly my happiness has been wrecked for life—my indignation is beyond bounds!"

"I tremble to hear you speak so passionately," said Eda, as she saw the wrath of Belmont pictured in his flushed cheeks and flashing eyes.

"I do not know," he added, "that your aid will be required to unmask this miscreant, but I wish to leave him no loop-hole of retreat from the conviction of falsehood which I shall fasten upon him. If you were gone, he might invent some new fiction, which I should be without the means to controvert."

"I see."

"Of course, your visit to your father shall be only deferred, not abandoned, and I will be answerable for all charges."

"Do not speak of it—you, to whom I already owe everything."

"Say not so, Eda; I would have you forget that you have any reason to be grateful to me."

Miss Walworth's fellow passengers were of course greatly astonished to see her preparing to leave the ship before it was fairly out of port; and when, with her brother and their baggage, she was helped into the pilot boat, which came alongside about twenty miles below the city, various conjectures were started as to the cause of so unusual a movement; and the waggish captain, shaking his head gravely at Howard, said that if he had known his errand, he did not think he should have been able to hear his hail.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

HARSH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

What Anselm, of Canterbury, at the end of the eleventh century, said against the rigid monastic discipline, is admirable. An abbot complained, in conversation with him, of the incorrigible youths who would not be amended by all the correction he administered. Anselm replied: "You never cease beating the boys, and what sort of men will they be when they grow up?" "Stupid and brutish," answered the abbot. "A good sign for your method of education," said Anselm, "when you educate men into brutes!" The abbot answered: "Is that our fault? We try to compel them in all manner of ways, to be better, and yet we effect nothing." "You compel them?" answered Anselm. "Tell me, then, I pray you, if you planted a tree in your garden, and enclosed it on all sides, so that it could not spread out its branches in any direction, and after some years transplant it in an open space, what kind of tree would it have become? Certainly a useless one, with crooked, tangled branches.—And whose fault would it be but your fault, who trained the tree in this over-compulsory manner."

THE CONCEALED WILL.

BY MARY GRACE HALPINE.

CHAPTER I.

Sir William Driscoll lay upon his dying bed. Not all the array of luxury that surrounded him, its downy pillows and silken drapery could make it an easy place to him. He tossed restlessly upon his couch, low moans escaped from his pallid lips, while upon his whole countenance was stamped an expression which showed that they proceeded from something more than mere physical suffering.

All the sad mistakes of his misdirected life loomed up before him. There thronged around his pillow many old familiar faces, all looking sadly and reproachfully upon him. There stood the wife of his youth, his gentle-hearted, loving Alice, who commended with her last breath their child to his care and protection. There was his brother, who, dying, left his only son to his guardianship. And lastly, there came the brave, high-spirited youth, whom he had goaded into rebellion by harshness and injustice, and then driven from his home and country.

But soon exhausted nature came to his relief, and closing his eyes he seemed to slumber.

There was only one person present—a woman about forty, still handsome, and who, in her youth, must have been surpassingly beautiful. Yet was there something unpleasing in the general expression of her countenance—a hard, cold glitter in the dark eyes, and an expression of mingled pride and cunning around the lips, which were too thin and inflexible for beauty.

Suddenly the door was thrown open, and a man entered, whose footsteps fell heavily even upon the soft, luxurious carpet. He strongly resembled the woman, though there seemed to be more of the animal in his composition, and the words that fell from his lips showed that they were mother and son.

"Hush! he is sleeping," said the woman, raising her hand with a warning gesture.

The person addressed turned and looked upon the sleeper. The sight of that haggard face, the thin, gray hair and hollow temples should have awakened feelings of regretful tenderness in the heart of the man who had been loved and cherished by him from his boyhood. But there was nothing in the expression of his countenance that indicated it. His eyes had an eager, dissatisfied look, as though he was counting the few remaining sands of life, and was impatient that there were still so many.

Had he looked a little closer, he might have discovered a slight tremor of the eyelids; but it escaped his notice, and turning carelessly away, he threw himself into a seat beside the woman, in a recess at the other end of the room, where they conversed in low but audible tones.

"He is a long time dying," said the new-comer, with a shrug of impatience.

"Yes; but the doctor says that he cannot possibly survive the night."

"And the will—have you induced him to sign it yet?"

"Yes; he signed it more than six months ago, the day after he received the letter informing him that his nephew knew of his desire to be reconciled with him, but refused to return."

"Ah! that was a good move of yours, mother," said the young man, with a low chuckle.

"Have you seen Ethel since your return?" inquired his companion, breaking the silence that followed.

"Yes; I just met her as I was crossing the hall. I held out my hand to her, but with the air of an insulted queen she drew back and refused to take it. She will come down a trifle from her present elevation, I'm thinking, when she finds out the conditions of her father's will. Confound the little gipsy! but she is lovelier than ever. Do you really think that she will prefer beggary to a union with me?"

"It is impossible to say," said his mother, musingly. "She is very strongly attached to her cousin. By the way, another letter came from him to Sir William last week."

"It didn't fall into the old man's hands, I hope."

"Oh, no; I took good care of that."

"Well, what did he write?"

"The same old story—full of contrition and affection. He complains of receiving no answers to his letters, and says that he needs no pecuniary assistance, but is very anxious to hear of the welfare of his uncle and Ethel."

"Well, I suppose the baronetcy will be his—there is no help for that—and this gloomy old building, with the few acres that surround it. I wish him joy of his inheritance! If there is a man on earth that I hate, with a perfect hatred, it is Alfred Driscoll! The blow that he gave me at our last meeting, if not wiped out, as it should be, in his heart's blood, he will find will yet cost him dear."

As Gilbert Manning said this, he brushed back the hair from his left temple, disclosing a small scar, while his whole countenance darkened with an expression of deep, concentrated rage.

"Be careful, my son," said Lady Driscoll, looking cautiously toward the bed; "Sir William may wake and hear you."

Gilbert arose and approached the bed.

"He is still sleeping," he said, returning. "But come," he added, "let us take a few turns in the garden; I have something of importance to tell you, and this room is so close and deathly that it oppresses me."

After a moment's hesitation, Lady Driscoll consented.

As she passed through the ante-room, she directed the servant in waiting to watch beside his master, charging him to call her at once if there was any change in him.

As soon as the door closed after them, Sir William's eyes flashed open; and summoning all his strength, he raised himself upon his elbow, and glared wildly around the room.

"Great God!" he ejaculated, striking his clenched hand against his forehead, "am I awake or dreaming? How basely have I been deceived! Is it possible that there can be such black ingratitude? Oh, Alfred, my dear brother's son, how cruelly have I wronged you! But, thank God, it is not too late, even now!

"Go to Miss Ethel, and bid her come to me at once," he said to the attendant, who now approached him, alarmed at these incoherent expressions.

"Shall I speak to Lady Driscoll, sir?" inquired the servant, as he was about to leave the room. "She told me to be sure and call her if you were any worse."

"Not on any account. Do as I bid you. And, harkee, see that we are not interrupted."

When Ethel entered the room, the strength born of excitement had subsided, and Sir William lay pale and gasping upon the pillow.

The gentle-hearted girl had ever more feared than loved her father, whose habitual manner toward her, especially of late years, had evinced little parental tenderness; but the sight of this terrible change in him threw down the barrier of reserve that had been erected between them.

"Dear father," she said, "you are very ill. Let me call for assistance."

"No," said Sir William, speaking with great difficulty; "what I have to say must be said to you, and you only. Listen to me, my child, and remember every word that I say, for I have but brief time to speak in. You know, that in a moment of anger I banished your cousin Alfred from my house. God is my witness that I meant not that it should be forever; but hearing nothing from him, and believing him to be rebellious and ungrateful, I would not stoop to recall him. Instigated and influenced by others, I signed a will disinheriting him so far as the law would let me. But, thinking that he might return when he heard of my declining health, I secretly made another will, dividing my property between you, putting it, for safe keeping, in a place known only to myself. Back of your uncle Edward's portrait, that hangs in the library, is a secret panel, so constructed as to be invisible to the eye, but which a firm pressure of the hand will slide back. You will find it there. Communicate this fact *only to him*. Write to him when I am gone, giving him my blessing and forgiveness. I withdraw my interdiction to your marriage, in the full belief that he is worthy of you. Tell him to return at once. Would that he were here now to protect you! I leave you among enemies. Beware! your step-mother——"

Just at this juncture Lady Driscoll entered. Her countenance darkened as she observed who was present; for it was her policy to keep the father and daughter separate.

"How often have I told you," she said, sharply, "that your father cannot endure the least excitement? Stand aside!"

The weeping girl mechanically obeyed this imperious mandate, and the wily woman, bending over the pillow, said in her most dulcet tone:

"My own love, are you any worse?"

The dying man threw up his hands with a look of detestation and horror.

"Take her away; she suffocates me!" he said.

Then the arms fell back; there was a sharp rattle in the throat, a momentary convulsion of the features, and he was gone.

With a bitter cry of grief Ethel threw herself upon her knees beside the lifeless form of her father, who had never seemed so dear to her as now; but Lady Driscoll gazed for a moment steadfastly into the face of the dead, as if to make sure that life was indeed extinct, a look of satisfaction gradually settling upon her countenance, and then, gathering up the folds of her costly robe, with her usual slow and stately step, left the room.

CHAPTER II.

With all the pomp and pageantry with which earth honors the wealthy and high-born, Sir William Driscoll was laid in the old family tomb, and upon the ensuing morning Ethel was summoned to the library, to witness what purported to be the last will and testament of the deceased.

She found Lady Driscoll and her son already present, together with the lawyer, a small weazen-faced man, a relative of Lady Driscoll's, and for whom Ethel had always had an instinctive dislike. The former was attired in the deepest possible mourning, with which the ill-concealed look of triumph which sat upon her countenance but little accorded.

Ethel was very pale, but her manner was perfectly calm and self-possessed. She simply inclined her head in reply to Lady Driscoll's ceremonious salutation, but entirely ignored the presence of her son, who half arose from his seat at her entrance, and passing directly by him, without giving him a look or sign of recognition, took a seat at some distance from them both.

Upon reading the will, it was found that Sir William, after settling upon Lady Driscoll a life annuity, had left the remainder of his large estate, with the exception of the small portion strictly entailed, to his daughter Ethel, on the sole condition, however, that she gave her hand to Gilbert Manning, his wife's son by a former marriage. In case she refused, it was to revert to said Gilbert and his heirs forever.

Contrary to the expectations of both mother and son, whose eyes were fixed curiously upon her, Ethel manifested neither surprise nor discomfiture at this singular revelation. But when interrogated by the lawyer, as to whether she intended to comply with the only condition which would save her from actual poverty, she returned a prompt and decided negative.

Lady Driscoll was well aware of the repugnance with which her step-daughter would regard any such proposition, but her haughty spirit took fire at the slight conveyed by these words to her idolized son.

"It strikes me as being a little singular," she said, sneeringly, "that the daughter, who seemed to be so overwhelmed with grief at the loss of her father, should so deliberately disobey his last wishes."

"Madam," returned Ethel, looking her step-mother steadily in the eye, "I am *not* disobeying my father's last wishes. When he signed that will he was, as you well know, greatly deceived. Were he living now, he would not wish me to marry a man whom I can neither love nor respect."

"Very good. But may I inquire, since you refuse my countenance and protection, what you propose to do with yourself?"

"Certainly. It is my intention to remain here, for the present, to await the return of my cousin, Sir Alfred Driscoll. Whatever disposition may have been made of the principle part of my father's estate, Driscoll Hall is his; and I shall, therefore, infringe upon neither the rights of yourself nor son by so doing."

"I, of course, have nothing to say in regard to so *proper* and *maidenly* a proceeding," said Lady Driscoll, irritated by her step-daughter's unruffled composure of look and manner, which she could not at all comprehend. "Though when your lover is aware that you are penniless, it is a question in my mind as to whether he will be so anxious, as you imagine, to claim the hand that you are in such unseemly haste to place at his disposal; especially as he is very nearly a beggar himself."

Ethel's eyes flashed at this unprovoked insult, but feeling how important it was that she should retain her self-command, without trusting herself to reply, she arose and left the room.

Gilbert Manning ground his teeth together with rage and disappointment.

"Death and furies!" he exclaimed, "I had thought myself sure of her, but she seems, now, to be further from my grasp than ever. By St. George! but she bears herself right royally; as though she was a queen in her own right, and I but the dust beneath her feet. But let her be careful. My love may turn to hate; and she will find it, then, a thing not to be despised!"

"What do you care for this doll-faced girl, Gilbert?" said Lady Driscoll, soothingly. "Her entire fortune will be yours, whether she marries you or not; and with this in your possession, you can easily win a far more fitting bride. Ethel Driscoll has been a hindrance and a thorn in my path ever since I came into the house; and I, for one, shall be glad to be well rid of her."

"I tell you I do care for her, mother!" returned Gilbert, fiercely. "I would give half the wealth that we have schemed so much to obtain to call her mine; if it were only for the sake of humbling her haughty spirit. And I will find some means of bringing it about yet."

Lady Driscoll said no more; for she had

learned by experience how useless it was to oppose any purpose that he was bent upon accomplishing; and after sitting for some minutes in moody silence, he got up and went to his own room.

When there, he rang the bell, with a quick, impatient hand.

"Send Carlos to me," he said to the servant who answered it.

Carlos soon made his appearance.

He was a swarthy, whiskered Mexican, of slender but compact figure, and with that look of duplicity and cunning characteristic of his race. Gilbert Manning had picked him up during his travels in Mexico, several years before, and he had been in his service ever since.

"Carlos," said Gilbert, in a low voice, after taking the precaution to see that there was no one within hearing, "I have several times entrusted you with commissions of importance, which you have discharged to my entire satisfaction. I have now something for you to do, of a similar nature, which will test still further your skill and fidelity. You know Miss Driscoll, my mother's step-daughter?"

"The fair, blue-eyed lady, who looks so pale and sad? Si, senor."

"Well, I wish you to keep a quiet but close watch upon all her movements, and to use your utmost endeavor to intercept any letters that she may attempt to send from the house, and bring them directly to me. She will be likely to send by the hands of her waiting maid Hannah, as I have sent away all the other servants in whom she would be likely to place any confidence. It strikes me that you are getting up quite a desperate flirtation with this damsel."

Carlos stroked his moustache with a complaisant air, through which gleamed a momentary glimpse of his white teeth.

"Anything to pass the time away in this dull place, senor," he drawled.

"Well, do you think that you have sufficient influence over the girl to induce her to place in your charge any letters that her mistress may entrust to her keeping?"

"She will do whatever I ask her. I have promised to marry her next Christmas."

"To marry her?" said his master. "Why you unconscionable rascal! you have a dozen wives now, to my certain knowledge."

"Only four, senor," returned Carlos, coolly.

"Quite a moderate number! But it is little that I care how many you have, providing you get yourself into no trouble. Be very cautious. Do not let Miss Driscoll see you conversing with her maid, or she will suspect something. If you succeed, you shall have this," he added, holding up before him a well-filled purse.

Carlos' eyes sparkled as he caught a glimpse of the glitter of the gold through its silken meshes, for avarice was one of the ruling propensities of his nature.

"I will not fail, senor," he replied, as he turned away.

A few days after this conversation, Carlos entered his master's room and handed him a letter.

Gilbert Manning's countenance lighted up with exultation as he observed the superscription, and giving Carlos the promised reward, he quickly bolted the door and tore it open. But his look of triumph changed to fear and consternation as he read it.

It was directed to Col. Driscoll, Calcutta, and ran as follows:

Dear Alfred:—Lose no time in starting at once for England. My poor father is dead. A great change seemed to come over him a short time before his death. He expressed much regret for the wrong and injustice he had done you, and bade me give you his blessing. A will has been found, in which he disinherits you, leaving the bulk of his property to me, but only on condition that I marry Gilbert Manning, to which death would be far preferable. In case I refuse, it all goes to this base man, who, together with his unprincipled mother, has schemed for years to this end.

But fortunately, in some relenting mood, Sir William made another will, of a later date, dividing the estate equally between us. *That will is still in existence.* My father revealed to me its place of deposit, charging me to communicate it *only to you.* He seemed, at that late hour, to have imbibed a sudden distrust of his wife, who, as you know, had obtained a strong ascendancy over his mind, which she used for the basest purpose. My unhappy father is far more to be pitied than blamed. He loved you to the last, and I am convinced would have recalled you, had he received the slightest intimation that you desired a reconciliation. But Lady Driscoll was untiring in her efforts to poison his mind against you. She it was who induced him to believe you to be wholly in fault in regard to the difficulty you had with her son, and which led to that fatal misunderstanding which has made you an exile from your home and country; and not satisfied with this, she has done her utmost to alienate his affections from me, his only child.

I trust that you will not fail to return as soon as possible. My situation is very unpleasant. Gilbert Manning is still here, and seizes every opportunity to press upon me his hateful suit. Nearly all of our faithful servants left some time before Sir William's death; unwilling to submit to the haughty, overbearing sway of their new mistress, and the remainder were dismissed by lady Driscoll immediately after, and their places filled by creatures of her own. So, with the exception of my faithful maid Hannah, who is still with me, I feel as if I was surrounded by spies and foes instead of friends.

I have many things on my mind to tell you, but must reserve them until the happy time of our meeting, which I pray God may be soon.

Your true and loving cousin,
Ethel Driscoll.

Gilbert Manning read this letter through twice, and then, with compressed lips and frowning brow, sought his mother's room.

"Here is a fine termination to all our deeply laid plans," he said, throwing the letter upon the desk before her. "If that is true, I am a beggar, and you little better!"

Lady Driscoll turned pale as her mind took in its import.

The indifference that Ethel had manifested when informed of the singular disposition of her father's estate had puzzled her, and her quick eye had not failed to discover, that just before his death, there had been a renewal of affection and confidence between the father and daughter. But believing that it came too late to enable him to make any change in her favor, it had made little impression upon her.

All this seemed clear to her now. "If that will is not found and destroyed, we are lost!" she said.

"And there is no time to lose," returned her son; "for, though this precious epistle will never reach him, the news of his uncle's death through the public prints will not fail to bring him home. I move that we compel this headstrong girl to tell us where the will is. We can easily do it; she is so completely isolated from the world as to be entirely in our power."

But Lady Driscoll opposed this proposition. She was full as anxious and determined as her son, but she had great faith in the power of diplomacy, especially in her own. Through the means of her remarkable powers of address and dissimulation, she had completely ruled the late haughty and arbitrary baronet, and she had little doubt but what she could as easily influence his daughter, did she consider it worth while to attempt it; inducing her, if not to reveal the place where the will was secreted, to give her some clue which would lead to its discovery.

CHAPTER III.

The next morning, as Ethel was sitting in her own apartment, she was not a little surprised at receiving a visit from her step-mother, whose hatred and aversion to her had been plainly visible to her eye through the veil of cold and stately politeness, which had been the extent of their intercourse.

"My dear daughter," she said, blandly, her whole countenance transformed into an expression of winning gentleness, "you doubtless feel surprised to see me here; but it was the last wish of my lamented husband that I would be a mother to his orphan child, and it seems to be fitting that we, who have lost our dearest earthly friend, should lay aside all former unfriendliness, and cultivate a spirit of confidence and affection. I deeply lament our long estrangement, and feel that I have been the most to blame. Your rejection of my son, who, with all his faults, is naturally dear to me, could not fail to be a great disappointment, but conscious that the right of choice belongs to you, I feel, now, that you were perfectly justified in so doing."

Ethel, though young, was a person of too much penetration to be deceived by this sudden profession of friendship from one whose every word and action, until now, had expressed sentiments of a far different nature. She was too well acquainted with her step-mother's character not to feel certain that there was something behind all this assumed softness of manner, and that it boded her no good. So, unwilling to commit herself, she merely bowed, awaiting in silence the development of the object of all this unexpected display of affection.

Without appearing to notice the coolness of her reception, Lady Driscoll continued:

"In looking over the papers of your dear father, I came across something that convinced me that he left a will of a later date, and which should take the place of the one now in force."

As the wily woman said this, she fixed her eyes keenly upon the young girl's face, who, in spite of all her efforts, could not wholly conceal the alarm which this unexpected intimation occasioned.

"I presume that you are well aware of the existence of such a will," added Lady Driscoll, as Ethel made no reply.

Ethel experienced a sudden sensation of relief; for she was convinced, by her step-mother's manner, that she knew of nothing but the mere fact, and even that might be only a suspicion. So she replied:

"I neither deny nor affirm it."

"I was confident that you would not," said Lady Driscoll, in the same bland, insinuating tone, affecting to take this as an admission of the truth of her assertion; "especially to me, who have such an undoubted right to know. Neither do I believe that you will withhold from me the privilege of carrying out his intentions, whose lightest wish is sacred to me, and which is now the only consolation that I have."

Knowing, as Ethel did, that she had not only married her father from mercenary motives, but had looked forward with impatience to the period of his death, the scorn that was aroused in her heart by these words was plainly visible in her countenance.

"If there *is* such a will, madam," she replied, "which I have not, neither do I now acknowledge, you need not have the slightest fear but that it will, at the proper time, be made known to you, and that every opportunity will be afforded you of complying with all its provisions."

The first glance at Ethel's countenance, as she said this, convinced Lady Driscoll that she was understood, and that all this acting was entirely thrown away. Rage at this unexpected failure, and mortification at having humbled herself for naught, by turns filled her bosom. The mask dropped from her face, disclosing all the evil passions of her nature.

"Have a care, girl," she hissed through her closed teeth; "you have crossed my path once too often! Think not to evade me; there is more than one way of obtaining the information I seek, as you will find to your cost!"

This threat, coupled with the knowledge that her step-mother had, by some means, gained possession of her secret, filled Ethel with alarm at her unprotected situation. She had for several days been conscious that a secret watch had been set upon her movements. She never took even a walk in the garden but what she was followed by Carlos, generally upon some pretext or other, but evidently keeping a close watch of her every motion. Gilbert Manning had grown daily more insolent and overbearing, and Lady Driscoll had now thrown aside every disguise, and openly avowed her enmity.

Driscoll Hall was situated in a pleasant but lonely part of the country, at some distance from any human habitation, the nearest village being nearly three miles distant. In this village resided a distant relative of her mother's, and she determined to place herself under his protection until her cousin's return, which might be delayed some weeks.

Being fearful of opposition, if not detention, should lady Driscoll, or her son know of her intentions she resolved to wait until night, and then to leave the house secretly, and upon foot. She imparted her design to her maid Hannah, in whom she had perfect confidence, and who, until she was subjected to the influence of the wily Mexican, was worthy of it; placing in her charge some articles which she wished to preserve, and directing her to follow her to her place of refuge the ensuing morning.

After waiting until the house was still, Ethel started, with some trepidation, upon her lonely journey. She became more composed when she lost sight of the house; for accustomed to walking, she felt that she should soon be in a place of safety.

But she had not proceeded far when two men suddenly sprang up from behind some bushes that were directly in her path. One of them seized hold of her while the other wound a large mantle around her head, to stifle her outcries, and then taking her up in his arms, bore her swiftly back in the direction from which she started.

But though they proceeded to Driscoll Hall, they took a bye path, which led to an unoccupied part of the building. Through a number of dark passage-ways and down a pair of steep, narrow stairs they carried the helpless girl, who, from fright and partial suffocation, had become insensible, and opening with a huge, rusty key a low, heavy door, thrust her into a dark dungeon, some feet in the bowels of the earth, used in ancient times for the incarceration of criminals, but which had not been opened for many a year, and whose very existence was almost forgotten.

When Ethel returned to consciousness, she started to her feet and looked anxiously around. The faint light of the lantern at her side revealed the extent of her gloomy prison, and the utter impossibility of an escape.

As her mind was busy with the horrors of her situation and her probable fate, with a heavy jar the massive door swung back and a man entered. He had a black mask upon his face, while a large cloak nearly concealed his figure; but in spite of this disguise, a shudder more deadly than that of fear crept over Ethel as she looked upon him. But struggling against the terrible suspicion that made her cheek pale, she said boldly, "Gilbert Manning, what is the meaning of this outrage? Nay, do not start! Did you suppose that that mask and cloak could conceal you from me? Even if I did not recognize *you*, I should know *this* to be *your* work. Again I ask, what is the meaning of this?"

"And so you know me, do you, fair lady?" replied Gilbert, with a brutal laugh. "It is well; my revenge will be all the sweeter. When you remember all the insults you have heaped upon me, do you not tremble to find yourself completely in my power?"

"Base wretch!" returned Ethel, "I know that there is no deed of darkness of which you are not capable; but I am *not* in your power. I am in the hands of One far mightier. To him I commend myself!"

"Do so," said Gilbert, sneeringly, "and see how much it will avail you. But I have not come to parley with you, but to give you this one chance to escape the doom that awaits you. Tell me where the will is that Sir William revealed to you upon his death-bed, and I will restore you to life and liberty. Otherwise, *you will never leave this place alive!* I will give you one hour in which to make your decision. At the expiration of that time I shall return, and if you refuse to tell me, *you shall die!*"

Slowly the heavy door swung back into its place, and Ethel was left alone. A cold moisture started out upon her face, a deadly sickness overpowered her, and she sank down upon her knees. The pulsations of her heart grew fainter and fainter, her very breath seemed to congeal upon her lips. She made a strong effort to speak, to even move, but vainly. And when Gilbert Manning returned, he found his victim stretched upon the floor, apparently as cold and insensible as the stones upon which she was resting.

Supposing it to be a mere fainting fit, he raised her up and laid her upon a rude couch that was placed in a niche in the wall, and busied himself for some minutes in endeavoring to restore her to consciousness. But finally alarmed at her coldness and pallor, and the fast increasing rigidity of the limbs, he went out, soon returning, accompanied by his mother.

Lady Driscoll regarded that motionless form attentively for a moment, and then laid her hand upon the wrist and heart. "She is dead!" she said, turning upon her son an enquiring look.

"She died of fright, then," he returned quickly replying to the look she gave him, rather than her words; "for I can swear that I have not laid my hand upon her!"

"She is dead, nevertheless," said Lady Driscoll quietly; "and it is well for us that she is. She can do us no mischief, now; *for her secret dies with her.*"

"True. And I am sure that I ought to be obliged to her for stepping off so quietly. She has saved me an ugly job; for I really believe that the obstinate girl would have died rather than reveal what is so important that we should know. But how had we better dispose of the body?"

"It will be the safest way for us to carry her back and leave her upon her own bed," said Lady Driscoll, after a moment's reflection: "leaving the impression that she died in her sleep. There are no marks of violence about her, and it will be likely to prevent any unpleasant rumors that otherwise might be set afloat concerning us."

In the dead of night, quietly and cautiously, the remains of the unfortunate girl were conveyed to her chamber, which she had quitted in the glow of youth and health, but a few hours before.

CHAPTER IV.

The next morning the whole neighborhood was astir with the intelligence that Ethel Driscoll had been found dead in her chamber.

Physicians were summoned, who gave it as their opinion, that she died from some organic disease of the heart, precipitated by grief at the loss of her father, or by some sudden emotion.

Both Lady Driscoll and her son were generally disliked, and there were not wanting a few to assert that there was something singular in the circumstances connected with her death, and that they ought to be investigated; but these were silenced by the prevailing belief, that there was nothing for either mother or son to gain by this event. And so the matter rested.

Followed to the tomb by those who could not but be conscious that they were as much her murderers as though their hands were reddened with her blood, Ethel Driscoll was laid beside her father.

Upon the same day, near the close of the afternoon, a horseman dismounted at the village inn. His frank, intelligent countenance was bronzed by exposure to the sun, and his erect, soldierly bearing would have betrayed his profession, had it not been for the undress uniform he wore, which indicated that he was an officer in the British army.

As he alighted, he cast a searching glance around, and as his eye rested upon a tall, sturdy yeoman, who stood leaning against one of the pillars of the porch, a glow of pleasure lighted up his face, and stepping up to him, he laid his hand familiarly upon his shoulder.

The man turned and stared at him with a look of blank amazement.

"Don't you know me, Giles?" said the stranger, smiling.

"Bless my heart!" exclaimed the individual addressed, a look of intense delight overspreading his countenance, "if it isn't master Alfred. Sir Alfred, now, begging your pardon. A thousand welcomes home!"

A saddened look shadowed the countenance of the young baronet, at this allusion to his new title. "So my poor uncle is gone," he said. "I heard of his declining health, and started at once for England, hoping to find him alive. But the first paper that I took up upon landing contained an announcement of his death. Did he show any relentings toward me at the last?"

"It is hard telling, sir. That she devil that he married took care that none of the old servants should approach him, especially in his last sickness."

Sir Alfred's countenance darkened. "And my cousin Ethel," he said, after a pause, "how is she?"

Giles started, and cast a mournful look upon the face of the speaker. "Is it possible that you have not heard the saddest news of all?" he faltered. "My sweet young lady is dead! She was placed in the tomb this morning."

Sir Alfred staggered back. "Dead? *my* Ethel dead?" he ejaculated.

"Yes," returned the poor fellow, unable to conceal his own grief at the recollection. "Her death was very sudden; she was, to all appearance, as well as any one the night before. God forgive me if I am unjust, but I do think that she has been the victim of some foul play."

He then proceeded to give Sir Alfred a brief account of the events that had occurred during his absence, mentioning many circumstances which induced him to believe that the unfortunate girl had been unfairly dealt with.

As Sir Alfred listened, to the expression of grief that his features wore was added a sterner look. "If this be so," he said, "it shall go hardly with all who have had any hand in it. And I will know whether it is not before the rising of another sun."

Then directing Giles to follow him, he sprang into the saddle, and in a moment more was on his way to Driscoll Hall.

Lady Driscoll was considerably startled by his appearance, for she had not expected him for some days. She received him, however, with an appearance of great joy; apparently quite forgetful of their former difficulties.

"You have come to a sad house," she said, slowly raising her handkerchief to her eyes, partly because it suited her purpose to assume the appearance of one overwhelmed with grief, and partly to hide the mocking smile that curled her lip, as she observed the sorrow that was plainly visible upon his countenance. "You have, doubtless, heard that my dear daughter and your cousin is no more."

Sir Alfred's eyes fairly blazed with scorn. "Madam," he said, "I am but a blunt soldier; unlike yourself, unused to disguise my real sentiments and feelings. You never loved my cousin Ethel, neither have you been a friend to me. There is something strangely suspicious in the suddenness of her death, which I shall make it my special business to investigate."

And without giving the discomfitted woman opportunity to reply, Sir Alfred Driscoll left the room, and bidding Giles accompany him with a lantern, took his way to the ancient church, beneath which was the family tomb, that had been the last resting place of the Driscolls' for many generations.

After they had succeeded in raising the heavy door Sir Alfred directed Giles to precede him with the light, lingering a moment to make sure that there was no danger of the door falling back and shutting them in.

While he was thus engaged, he heard a loud scream, and immediately Giles came rushing back, nearly pushing him down in his eagerness to escape. "The saints preserve us, a ghost!" he gasped, pale and breathless with terror.

"A ghost?" returned Sir Alfred, impatiently, "what nonsense! You have got frightened at your own shadow."

"May I never speak another word," said Giles, solemnly, "if I didn't see a tall form, clothed all in white, sitting upon one of the coffins. As soon as it saw me, it rose up, and seemed to be coming toward me. Nothing could tempt me to go down into that vault again!"

"Give me the lantern, then." And taking it from his unresisting hand, Sir Alfred descended the stairs. When he reached the bottom, and looked around, his heart beat fast. There certainly was a slender figure there, attired in white, sitting in the same position that Giles had described. And as he looked at it steadily, it seemed to assume the form and features of his lost Ethel.

"It is I—Ethel Driscoll," said a feeble, plaintive voice. "In God's name don't leave me to perish in this horrible place!"

Quick as thought Sir Alfred sprang forward, and taking up tenderly the form of the half fainting girl, bore her to the open air. Then wrapping a large cloak around her, he carried her in his arms to the house. Oh! joy unutterable, to feel the faint throbbing of her heart against his own, and to know that she still lived!

It was some days before Ethel was able to give an account of her wrongs and sufferings.

It seems, though to all appearance dead, she was only in a trance; part of the time being conscious of all that was passing around her, though unable to speak or move.

After she was deposited in the vault, and all the people had departed, the terrible mental agony which came over her at the thought of the horrible fate to which she seemed to be doomed, broke the spell that bound her; and after some time spent in unavailing effort, she succeeded in bursting the coffin-lid. Yet she was unable to find any way of egress, or even to make herself heard; and sick and exhausted, and weak from want of food, she would have soon perished had it not been for Sir Alfred's providential appearance.

Before Ethel could relate the cruel treatment *she had received from their hands, Lady Driscoll, her guilty son and his accomplice had fled* the country, not daring to brave the consequences of their criminal conduct.

The will was found in the place where Sir William had secreted it, and declared to be legal. It divided the property equally between his daughter and nephew. But there could be no division of interests with those whose hearts had been so long united, and whose hands were soon joined in the holiest of all earthly covenants.

The after life of Sir Alfred and Lady Driscoll was smooth and tranquil, and more joys circled around their path than are usually allotted to the denizens of earth. Many fair children sprang up around them, making vocal with their gleeful shouts the stately halls of their ancestral home, and binding their hearts more closely to one another. Yet Ethel never forgot the terrible ordeal through which she passed, and often related to her children the strange story of her signal deliverance from the prison and the tomb.

FACTS IN PHYSIOLOGY.

A man is taller in the morning than at night to the extent of half an inch, owing to the relaxation of the cartilages.

The human brain is the twenty-eighth of the body, but in the horse but a four-hundredth.

Ten days per annum is the average sickness of human life.

About the age of 36 the lean man generally becomes fatter and the fat man leaner.

Richter enumerates 600 distinct species of disease in the eye.

The pulse of children is 180 in a minute; at puberty it is 83; and at 60 it is only 60.

Elephants live for two hundred, three hundred, and even four hundred years. A healthy full-grown elephant consumes thirty pounds of grain a day.

The flea, grasshopper and locust jump 200 times their own length, equal to a quarter of a mile for a man.

ANECDOTE OF FRANKLIN.

A young person once mentioned to Dr. Franklin his surprise that the possession of riches should be attended with undue solicitude, and instanced a merchant, who, in possession of unbounded wealth, was as busy, and much more anxious, than the must industrious clerk in his counting-house. The doctor, in reply, took an apple from a basket, and presented it to a child in the room, who could hardly grasp it in his hand. He then gave him a second, which filled the other; and choosing a third, remarkable for its size, he offered that also. The child, after many ineffectual attempts to hold the three apples, dropped the last on the carpet, and burst into tears. "See," said the doctor, "there is a little man with more riches than he can enjoy."

A BILLION.

What a very great sum is a billion! It is a million of millions. A million seems large enough—but a million of millions! how long do you suppose it would take you to count it? A mill which makes one hundred pins a minute, if kept to work night and day, would only make fifty-two millions five hundred and ninety-six thousand pins a year—and at that rate the mill must work twenty thousand years without stopping a single moment, in order to turn out a billion of pins! It is beyond our reach to conceive it—and yet when a billion of years shall have gone, eternity will seem to have just begun. How important then is the question, "Where shall I spend eternity?"

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

The false gentleman almost bows the true out of the world. He contrives so to address his companions as civilly to exclude all others from his discourse and make them feel excluded.

There are women who, without the gift of genius, fill our vase with wine and roses to the brim, so that the wine runs over and the house is filled with perfume.

In vain we chisel, as best we can, the mysterious block of which our life is made, the black vein of destiny continually re-appears.

There is a spectacle grander than the sea, it is the sky; there is a spectacle grander than the sky, it is the interior of the soul.

Fortresses and bulwarks are not half so secure as a kind, cheerful woman's little mental domain, with no other protection than its ring-fence of evergreens.

You may as well become a conductor of other men's lightning, if you can give out no sparks of your own.

A beautiful form is better than a beautiful face; a beautiful behavior is better than a beautiful form—it is the finest of the fine arts.

It has been asked why captains don't have their ships properly nailed in port instead of waiting to tack them at sea.

Don't let your sweetheart see you in a cold, frosty morning, or she will think your breath the smoke of a pipe.

Many ladies, who profess an enthusiastic love of nature, sit in their parlors as if expecting her to make a call.

A fellow with a pug nose may be as unnatural as he pleases. As Nature has snubbed him, he has a right to snub Nature.

The fanatic, though not fond of the heretic, has often been known to make a great toast of him.

Shut your eyes if you would discern a truth clearly. The corporeal eye puts out the mental one.

No punishment is too severe for him who would stop a thrill and plant in its place only a fact.

The sun stood still a few hours for Joshua. The very years stand still for a maiden of thirty.

The habit of snuff-taking seizes and holds its victim by the nose as St. Dunstan did the Devil.

There are no mortgages or taxes upon the soul's beautiful landscapes.

A woman given to scandal should be crowned with a tea-leaf wreath.

Urbanity, separated from religious charity, is rather the law of war than a treaty of peace.

A new hat, like a man who takes a large dose of opium, is apt to have a long nap.

The lady who, by her conduct, importunes a gentleman to propose to her, begs the question.

Woman is the *converse* of the great human proposition.

A gentleman makes no noise: a lady is always serene.

Without the rich heart, wealth is but an ugly beggar.

Heaven gives us enough when it gives us opportunity.

There is no exclusive property in truth. It belongs to him who recognizes it.

Eternal talkers are chastisers of the most blameless of our senses.

It not unfrequently happens that manners are best learned from the unmannerly.

Too much idleness leaves a man less his own master than any sort of employment.

Vanity is a strong drink that makes all the virtues stagger.

The forests are the hair of the earth-animal.

CURRENT ITEMS

Private letters from the army of the Potomac *say that the old and war-worn regiments are being fast filled up with drafted men, who are arriving by thousands, and who take to the service with great cheerfulness and good feeling. These new recruits will never be* able to realize what their veteran comrades have had to undergo in this war; as the organization of the army is now complete, the officers and men who have been on service for the past two years have learned "how to do it"—how to make the most and the best of their advantages and the least of hardships, all of which knowledge the recruits will have the benefit of from the start, without having to acquire it by bitter experience.

An officer of the Army of the Potomac, who recently came into our office to renew his subscription to the Ledger, stated, among other interesting and surprising things, that at the battle of Gettysburg, when Lee made his last desperate attack on our forces on Friday, the third day of the fight, "the air was full of iron, and the screaming of the shells was so great that I could not *hear the report* of our heavy guns, near which I was lying with my men, although we could see the flash and feel the ground tremble at their discharge." That must have been a situation to try a man's nerve.

It is stated in Southern papers that the reason the Texan soldiers who had been under Pemberton's command, shot that officer, was because they believed him to be a traitor. They did not believe this because he surrendered Vicksburg, as they all knew it was impossible for him to defend that place any longer, but they believed it because he allowed Grant to pen so many thousands of them up in that city, where their capture was inevitable. If they reason in that way, they ought also to shoot the generals that Grant penned up and captured in Fort Donaldson and other places.

A girl at work in a factory in New Jersey, when about to leave the premises one afternoon at the close of the day's labor, hopped upon the end of a shaft that projected about a foot above the floor and turned slowly around, saying, as she did so, "I will have a ride on this, if it breaks every bone in my body." The words had scarcely passed her lips when she slipped, her hoops caught on the shaft, and before she could be rescued, she was whirled round and round until every bone in her body was actually broken.

A bit of delicious gossip has been afloat in London and Paris to the effect that Queen Victoria contemplates a second marriage, to the great scandal and horror of her children. The reputed bridegroom is said to be ex-King Ferdinand of Portugal, who is a scion of the house of Coburg and therefore related to the late Prince Albert. If there be no truth in the rumor, its circulation in England must be unspeakably annoying to the Queen and her family.

A large and enthusiastic Union meeting was held in the southern part of Tennessee, a short time since, at which sound, patriotic speeches were made and incisive Union resolutions passed. It is said that Union representatives from the northern counties of Georgia and Alabama were present at the meeting, and pledged their respective sections to the support of the national cause. This begins to look like old times in that part of the Union.

Five or six sailors just from a long cruise, were roaming around town one evening lately, in search of the "elephant," and the animal appeared to them suddenly in the shape of a mad cow, which came from no one knew where, and putting the poor tars to their best paces, compelled them at last to leap into the river to escape her horns.

This is one of the worst seasons of the year for children. Cold evenings and mornings, with hot middays, induce many complaints to which children are liable, and especially such children as have passed the summer in the country and have now returned to the city. They should be kept warmly clothed, and their diet should be particularly looked after.

An unknown man was seen to pull off his coat, hat and shoes at the foot of Pier 21, East River, the other evening, and then plunge into the water. As he did not reappear, search was made for his body but it could not be found. The conclusion come to by the police, who took part in the search, was that the stranger meant to commit suicide, and they took his coat, hat and shoes to the station-house, to await identification.

A man in Rhode Island who was drafted in two districts, in order to prevent any difficulty as to the district that was entitled to him, sent a substitute from one of them and went himself from the other. That was a great deal better than to get out a writ of *habeas corpus* under any *pretence* whatever.

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THE ROMAN EMPERORS.—No. 30.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

JOVIAN, VALENTINIAN AND VALENS.

Julian the Apostate died on the plains of Mesopotamia, from a javelin wound. He was at the head of an army many leagues from the Bosphorus, and this army was already surrounded by exultant foes. Julian was hastily buried, and the vanquished Romans commenced their retreat. Menaced with famine and pestilence, with gory corpses strown throughout their camp, and the din of war rising around them, the soldiers hastily nominated Jovian, a heroic officer of the imperial guard, as emperor. It so happened that Jovian was a Christian—a Christian not only intellectually but in heart and life. He was a man majestic alike in stature and character. His heroism and military ability had given him a high reputation in the army; and when, much to his surprise, by the almost unanimous vote of the soldiers, he was elected emperor, he said sadly, yet nobly:

"I am a Christian. I cannot be the emperor of avowed idolaters. The wrath of God is, even now, ready to fall upon an army of his enemies."

All men are disposed to look to God when trouble comes. The whole army was in imminent peril of annihilation. All who escaped the sword would be sold into perpetual slavery. The officers, in their alarm, gathered around Jovian, and entreated him to accept the imperial command.

"We will all return to Christianity," they said. "The reign of idolatry has been too short to efface the religious teachings of the good Constantine. If you will be our emperor we will return to the worship of the true God."

Jovian accepted the perilous office. Heaven's blessing seemed to rest upon him. With great sagacity he succeeded in extricating the army from its peril, by a treaty of peace with the Persian monarch. *It is refreshing to read of the frankness, sincerity and honesty with which this Christian man conducted affairs.* He scorned to resort, even for the accomplishment of the most important purposes, to anything like duplicity. For seven months the army was employed in its toilsome march of fifteen hundred miles to Antioch. Jovian introduced true toleration, allowing all men to worship God as they pleased. But there seemed to be throughout the empire, with all those whom Julian had induced to frequent the idol temples, a general disposition to abandon idolatry and to return again to Christianity. Paganism had revived but for a moment, and now, like a hideous dream of night, it passed away to be revived no more for ever.

The emblematic cross, which Julian had effaced from the Roman banners, was again emblazoned on those silken folds. The divine benediction seemed to rest on this truly good man. The whole empire welcomed his reign, and he was cheered and strengthened by the assurance that his authority was acknowledged from the Euphrates to the Atlantic. He had reached the obscure town of Dadastana within three hundred miles of Constantinople, when, one morning, he was found dead in his bed, accidentally stifled, as it is supposed, by the fumes of charcoal in his apartment. The sad procession, conveying his remains, was met by the weeping empress Charito, daughter of count Lucillian. She was even then mourning the death of her father, and was hastening to assuage her grief in the sympathies of her noble christian husband, who had so unexpectedly been elevated to the imperial throne. The tears of widowhood were bitter then as now. The broken hearted empress accompanied the remains of her husband to the tomb in Constantinople.

For ten days after the death of Jovian the Roman world remained without a sovereign. The generals and the ministers, whom Jovian had appointed, continued to conduct the administration. At length the army was marched to Nice in Bythinia, and the soldiers, according to the custom which had now become established, proceeded to the election of a new emperor.

The crown was first offered and then urged upon the prefect Sallust. He persistently refused it. It was then, with singular unanimity, offered to Valentinian. This worthy man, by his physical strength and his sagacity, had risen to the post of one of the highest generals, and, in successful campaigns in Africa and Britain, had acquired opulence and distinction. In stature he was majestic and graceful, and he was exceedingly courteous in his address. His features, symmetric and open, inspired his friends with affection, while his piercing eye seemed to penetrate the secret thoughts of his foes. His dauntless courage, his temperance and the perfect control he had acquired over his appetites and passions secured for him universal respect.

As he had spent nearly his whole life in the camp he had not acquired that high mental culture which can only be obtained by long devotion to the elegant pursuits of literature. Still he had a very effective eloquence at his command, through his native strong sense and his instinctive acquaintance with human nature. The old Roman idolatry he thoroughly despised; and often, during the reign of Julian, he had exposed himself to great danger by the freedom with which he denounced the imperial efforts to re-instate paganism. Such was the man who now, at the age of forty-three, without any intrigue of his own, was invited to assume the sovereignty of the Roman empire. Valentinian, ascending a lofty tribunal at Nice, was solemnly invested with the diadem and the purple. He made a brief address to the vast assemblage, in which, in terms of dignity and authority, he informed them that they, of their own free will, had chosen him to be their *master*, and that he should expect and require of them submission. Men love to be ruled by those who are capable of ruling them. The Roman soldiers received this speech of their sovereign with satisfaction and pride. From Nice he proceeded to Constantinople, and there appointed his brother Valens, then thirty-six years of age, as his colleague on the throne, giving him not the subordinate title of Cæsar, but the equal title of Augustus. Valentinian deemed the empire too vast to be administered by any one man. Retiring from Constantinople to the palace of Mediana, the two brothers made the solemn and the final division of the Roman empire. This great event, one of the most important recorded in history, took place in June, 364. Valens took for his empire the east from the lower Danube to the confines of Persia. The Western Empire, from Greece to the Atlantic, was assigned to Valentinian.

The two brothers, having performed this solemn act, affectionately embraced each other and separated, never to meet again. Valentinian, as emperor of the West, established his capital at Milan. Valens returned to Constantinople as the metropolis of the East. But Valens was by no means equal to the task which he had assumed. He had neither strength of will nor amiability of character. The Persians invaded his frontiers. Conspiracies sprang up in his capital. The insurgents, under their able leader Procopias, became absolute masters of the imperial city. They then pushed out in disciplined martial bands and took possession of the adjacent provinces. Valentinian was greatly alarmed in view of this attack upon his brother, who was then on the banks of the Euphrates fighting the Persians. He could send him no aid, for all his armies were absorbed in a Germanic war. Valens, weak and timid, was rescued from immediate ruin only by the heroism of one of his generals. The insurrection was quelled and Procopias was beheaded. The cruelties with which those who were involved in the revolt were punished were too revolting to be recorded. Cruelty was one of the characteristics of the times. Both of the brothers could look with indifference, and even pleasure, upon scenes of torture which modern humanity would faint in contemplating. The cages of two fierce and enormous bears were placed near the bed-chamber of Valentinian, and he amused himself in seeing them tear in pieces the limbs of those who were abandoned to their rage. And yet in many respects the reign of Valentinian was so beneficent that he received the appellation of the father of his country. Both of these princes preserved great purity of morals in their courts. Many corrupt usages were abolished and important reforms introduced. Schools were established, and the highest branches of learning assiduously cultivated. Valens, in his administration, was much under the control of the superior mind of his brother, Valentinian. The noblest principles of religious toleration were established by law throughout the empire of Valentinian, though Valens was liberal in his views. After an exceedingly stormy reign of twelve years, Valentinian died from the bursting of a blood-vessel in a fit of ungovernable passion in the year 375. Three years after Valens perished in a battle with the Goths, in which his army was defeated with awful slaughter. The emperor, sorely wounded, was conveyed to a cottage filled with the dying and the dead. The barbarians surrounded the cottage, set it on fire, and Valens perished in the flames.

THE DETECTIVES OF PRIVATE LIFE.

"Set a rogue to catch a rogue" has been a maxim in jurisprudence from time immemorial; but in social life it is unnecessary to set people who are not what they ought to be to ferret out the faults of their neighbors. In nine cases out of ten they undertake the task voluntarily, and prosecute it with a zeal and vigilance that would entitle them to honorary medals if they belonged to the police. Evil-minded themselves, they have little faith in the existence of virtue, and taking it for granted that there is "a skeleton in every closet," they make it their business to search for the concealed anatomies, and, if found, to trot them out and shake their dry bones exultingly before the public. If these self-constituted, volunteer detectives are of known bad character, they find no small consolation in the idea of bringing others down to their own *status*, and seem to entertain the idea that every crime or fault they can fix upon another lessens the magnitude of their own sins. The ordinary scoundrel who discovers the extraordinary scoundrelism of somebody else, says to himself, complacently, "Why, this fellow is worse than I am," and straightway begins to think himself a decent sort of person as the world goes. He finds it more convenient and congenial to his nature to level men down to his own dirty and disreputable platform, or below it, than to work his way up to a higher moral position where he might rank among honest men. In fact, he takes the ground that honesty is a myth, that all mankind are hypocrites, and that persons of good reputation are simply rascals who have not been found out. He hates instinctively, and with a deep and envious hatred, those in whom the keenest exercise of his prying propensities can discover no spot or blemish, and compensates himself for his lost labor by endeavoring to defile their honorable escutcheons with the smut of slander.

There are numbers of such Jonathan Wilds of private life in the community, and like the Southern turkey buzzards, that feed on offal, they are sometimes useful, though always disgusting. They unmask one another, and the honest and decent portion of society gain something by that; while, on the other hand, the stabs they aim at Truth and Virtue, though they may wound for the moment, rarely leave a permanent scar.

YOUTHFUL PRODIGIES.

It is a great error to suppose that what are called juvenile prodigies—in other words, children who can parrot off with great volubility a stream of facts relating to a variety of subjects, and answer with precision questions in history, geography, arithmetic, &c.,—are therefore wonderfully gifted intellectually. To do all this an extraordinary memory is required—nothing more—and memory is not intellect. Such children are merely machines that emit through their lips what they have received through the medium of their eyes and ears. Faber's speaking automaton had just as much idea of the meaning of what it uttered, as they have of the value and purport of the words they repeat by rote. The system of word-stuffing, by which the memory is overtaxed before the reasoning powers are awakened, is worse than worthless. "How is Europe bounded?" said a teacher who believed in early cramming, to one of his little pupils. "I, thou, he, she, it," was the reply. "For shame, Johnny, try again." "O! please, sir, I remember now; that is the answer to one of my Grammar questions, and I thought I was to be heard my Grammar first." Verbal knowledge is of little value, unless anchored in the mind of the learner to whys and wherefores. The practical application of every theory and principle laid down by the tutor should be clearly explained, and the utmost care taken not to overstrain the mind of the scholar by making too many demands upon it at once.

TAVERN LOUNGERS.

We have too many lazy, worthless, non-producers among us, and are too tolerant of such nuisances. In other countries a man without means who is capable of performing any labor, mental or muscular, must work or starve. Here we are more indulgent to loaferism. The bar-rooms of the hotels and taverns of our large cities are constantly haunted by shabby-genteel do-nothings, on the watch for good-natured individuals with more money than brains, of whom they hope to obtain small loans. Many of these professional Jeremy Diddlers are persons of considerable talent, extensive information and good conversational powers. They understand the arts of flattering and amusing, and upon these arts they trade. Some of them are the prodigal sons of honorable and wealthy citizens; incorrigibles who have worn out parental generosity and forbearance, and who, unable to obtain further "supplies" from "the governor," have betaken themselves to that most contemptible of all the shifts of dissipated laziness, tavern loafing; just as the worthless and ruined scions of noble European families were accustomed to take to "the road" for a livelihood, in the olden time. Upon the whole, however, we think the "noble highwaymen" of two hundred years ago were less despicable than the tippling dollar-borrowers of the present day. A good family name is not bad capital to swindle on. Men who would hesitate to give sixpence to a ragged, nameless pauper, not unfrequently open their purses to assist the "black sheep" of a first family, who is too lofty to beg, but not too proud to borrow under the false pretence of returning the loan he solicits in the course of a day or two. The habitual tavern loafer, when he has become too notorious to ply his game with success at one place, moves off to another and begins to experiment upon a new set of victims.

The parties who are fleeced, in these cases, are rightly served. They do not lend their money from benevolent motives. They do not expect it to be applied to good purposes. They know full well that if the hours wasted by the borrowers, in bar-rooms, were usefully employed, they would be in a condition to help the deserving poor instead of being applicants for undeserved help. It is neither wise nor prudent to visit the places where such vagabonds lounge; and whoever does so is in danger of becoming a vagabond himself at last.

If the society in which plausible drones pick up a living without labor, had sufficient moral courage to meet their solicitations with a determined *No*, it would be a blessing to all concerned. Convince these pensioners upon a false generosity that they must depend upon the legitimate exercise of their own talents for support, or famish, and a large proportion of them would adopt the disagreeable alternative which the able-bodied beggar said he *must* resort to if the charitable denied him alms. They would "*go to work*." Whoever *lends* to the lazy, dissipated and dishonest what he could otherwise afford to bestow in real charity, of so much *robs* the meritorious poor.

FASHIONABLE BONNETS.

If "coming events cast their shadows before," it will be worth while to keep a look-out for the indications of what we may soon expect to see in the way of bonnet. Already has the vegetable world been well nigh exhausted for the fruits, the foliage, and the flowers under which the tall, gothic headdresses of our belles have lately been tottering. *Now there is a tendency toward zoological ornature of the bonnet. Birds of Paradise were once the fashion with our grandmothers:* milliners are now busy with the introduction of the humming-bird to the heads of society. Of course the live humming-bird has not yet been added to the attractions of the new fashionable bonnets, though there is no good reason why it should not be. In South America it is no uncommon freak for the beauties to bejewel their dresses with live fire-flies put up in little glass cases, and the effect is stated to surpass that of the finest diamonds. Why does not some enterprising milliner contrive a bonnet with a little cage upon the pinnacle of it, containing real, live humming-birds? There is only one draw-back to the idea. Fashion is always liable to be overdone, and if one belle is seen abroad with a live-humming-bird bonnet on, we may well expect to see a rival beauty out some morning with a cage of canaries upon her head. Then the period of the mocking-bird will probably arrive, and there is no guessing where the thing would stop. At one of those wild fancy-balls lately given by the Empress Eugénie, who seems to be a little eccentric about dress, a lady appeared in the character of a forest, with a live owl flapping about upon her head. Natural history will be a more fascinating study than ever, should this kind of thing become the mode, when every belle will be a professor of ornithology, and every bonnet a monograph of birds.

GUINNESS, THE SENSATIONIST, AND CARTER & BROS., THE BOOKSELLERS.

[*From the Londonderry Standard.*]

"Having relinquished for the time the Baptist communion, Mr. Guinness has now commenced in this country (Ireland) a propagandist mission in connection with the 'Plymouth Brethren,' to whom he had attached himself in Canada, as our readers are aware, and during the last week or two he has been addressing meetings in Belfast for the seeming purpose of holding up Presbyterians to the contempt of the religious public, as a set of the worst heathens he has ever met with under the guise of professing Christians."

The above, which we copy from an Irish Presbyterian paper, the *Londonderry Standard*, we commend to the attention of Messrs. Carter & Bros., who, while making an honest penny by the sale of his clap-trap sermons, endeavored to keep this fellow, Guinness, prominently before the public when he was in this country. They even had the impudence to pronounce some statements that we published about him untrue; and they have never yet had the manliness to retract or apologize when informed of their mistake. If, however, they have made anything by interfering in our business, they have succeeded in doing what, so far as we are aware, nobody else has done; and are, therefore, entitled to some credit for their smartness. Now that Guinness has taken to abusing Presbyterians and holding them up, as the *Londonderry Standard* says, to the contempt of the public, we are anxious to know what course the Messrs. Carter will pursue? Will they abandon the profitable trade they have built up with Presbyterians, and still stick to Guinness; or will they discard his works and continue their old business? We ask this question because heretofore, notwithstanding they made all their money out of Presbyterians, they declined to publish sermons of some of our own leading Presbyterian clergymen, while they published and advertised extensively the sensation efforts of Guinness.

—Bashfulness is more frequently connected with good sense, than we find assurance—and impudence, on the other hand, is often the effect of downright stupidity.

—There are many things that are thorns to our hopes until we have attained them, and envenomed arrows to our hearts when we have.

WORD-CATCHING.

I dare say, now, gentle reader, that you have no very clear notion, as yet, of what I mean by "word-catching." You have probably heard the vulgar saying with reference to a taciturn person, that he "has not a word to throw to a dog," but I pray you not to infer, therefore, that the dog is given to word-catching, for the dog is an honest creature, and I love him. Nor, again, fix upon the industrious short-hand writer the epithet "word-catcher," for he, too, is an honest creature, and one entitled to a considerable amount of affection from his fellow-beings. The word-catcher of whom I am about to speak is quite the reverse of these two last-mentioned useful members of society. He is chiefly remarkable as a monument of moral obliquity, with a tedious inscription graven upon it, purporting to embody a bad pun. There is no rectitude about him. He cannot look an idea straight in the face: nor, although he often professes to walk, like some moral Blondin, upon a wire stretched high above the Niagara of conversation, can he there pursue "the even tenor of his way," but is sure to topple over on one side or the other, and fall down, down, into the depths of the infernal abyss, from which he unfortunately emerges alive, stuck all over with puns like a water-logged boat in its parasitical coating of barnacles. If his twisted words could only tie him down there, to the bottom, as the sea-tangle does the luckless diver who ventures its embraces, why, then, let him take his bushel of them; but it is a perverse fact that, instead of encumbering him as if weights, they actually float him up aloft as if wings, on which he wheels about among the little words with a snap at each of them, like a night-hawk marauding among the gnats of the upper air.

Perhaps, *now*, gentle reader, you have some little inkling of what I mean by word-catching. It is even possible that you may have been a victim once in a while to the miscreant who lives by catching the poor little words and converting them into chowder for depraved appetites. If so, receive the assurance of our mournful sympathy. If otherwise, permit me to suppose that you are not yet "out;" that you have been from your birth a deaf-mute; that you always have the but of a very large-sized navy revolver protruding from your breast-pocket, or that some equally happy circumstance protects you from the approaches of the social garroter, who would strangle your first word ere it had sparkled for one brief moment like some ephemeral insect in the sun.

I am happy to think that the Gorgon Medusa—on looking at whose head after it was cut off all hands were promptly converted into stone—must have presided at my birth. It is of use to me, I declare to you. I am assailed on the broad highway of talk, for instance, by some squalid word-catcher, with "your word or your life," when straightway I conjure up before me the visage of my Gorgon godmother, and am at once a cold, solid thing of stone, incapable of words, insensible to the abortive spasms of the futile garroter, and, generally, all serene, although without the slightest perceptible tendency to a smile around the arrested corners of my granitic mouth. Not thus, however, is the persevering word catcher always to be baffled. When his epilepsy is upon him he will bandy words with the Marble Faun, supplying the necessary responses himself. He has been overheard capping an imaginary conversation with the stove-metal Schiller that (in a particular condition of the wind) magnetizes the Hamburg swans to the foot of its pedestal from the further end of the lake in Central Park. Then he is driven sometimes to subsist upon his own words, and his moral dyspepsia is then an exhibition to which children ought to be admitted at half price, if there is any faith to be reposed upon the dogma that one warning is better than two weltings in its effect upon the infant mind.

Let me introduce, for illustrative purpose, the word-catcher in society. The wretch may be an "occasional reader;" and, should these lines meet his eye, pursuing conscience may yet harpoon him as he runs, and the tardy tear of repentance ultimately atone for a long and flagitious career of crime.

Imagine a pleasant family tea-table on a winter's evening; no stove—if you can imagine such a thing as that—but a bright coal fire burning cheerily in the grate. The conversation is charming, for there are two sisters who are witty, and a brother who, as he himself expresses it, is "no slouch when the brilliant repartee goes round." If ever there was a snug and happy party it was that. But, as there is a skeleton in the larder of every family, so is there ever a wet blanket in the laundry thereof, and the name of the one that fell at intervals upon the house of which I am speaking was Gilfogle. He fell upon us that night, but not quite suddenly, for one of the fair sisters was sure that she recognized his style in the ring at the door-bell, and we all certified him by his cough before he entered the room. As his hand was upon the door-knob I concentrated my will, and uttering in a pervading whisper the words "the Gorgon protect us!" prepared myself to become stony at a moment's notice. My words were not lost upon the party. It was a preconcerted signal with us, and they understood that they were all to resign themselves to stone the moment Gilfogle, the word-catcher, began to develop his pernicious tendencies: all except the old grandmother, who was usefully deaf, and so happily indifferent to the voice of the damper, no matter how loud his damping. The conversation surged upon a neighboring family, some of the daughters of which had lately returned from boarding-school, luminous with science and art. How well they sing, said one, and isn't their touch on the piano celestial, ejaculated another; but the youngest girl at the table, a sweet miss of sixteen, with a clear blue eye for the pictorial, was ecstatic about the artistic talents displayed by the admirable young female Crichtons under notice. "Oh, don't they draw well!" exclaimed she, dashing off an imaginary sketch near the surface of the table with her tea-spoon—"how I wish I could draw well, too!"

Here the word catcher, who had, until now, been agreeably reserved and stolid, expressed a desire for a glass of water. It was brought to him, sparkling in a cut-glass goblet upon a silver tray. He touched the mild beverage with his cruel lips, and then, turning his fish-like blink upon blue-eyed sixteen, said:

"The water is good: I love the wholesome fluid. Do you get it from the brook hard by?"

"No; it is brought from our well."

"A pump-well, I presume?"

"No; ours is a draw-well."

"Oh! ah!—Then your wish ought to be readily gratified."

"I do not understand."

"You said just now that you would like to draw well."

Had my Gorgon godmother suddenly bowled her snake-braided head into the midst of us, the petrifaction of our little party could not have been more complete than it was the moment the last accents of the word-catcher jingled among the tea-cups. The snug little parlor became a cavern in the rock. The two charming sisters were snow-white stalactites, "beautiful exceedingly" to look upon, but unimpressible as adamant. A depressing silence hung like black crape of an inferior quality upon the air, and the corners of the brilliant young man's mouth went down to a point where they met the angles of his shirt-collar, and then became permanent fixtures to be included in the rent of his face.

How long this state of things might have lasted I know not. "It might be for years, and it might be forever," had not the aged grandmother who sat by the chimney corner, came to the rescue and broken the spell. I have said that she was deaf—*usefully* deaf, I think, was my expression. It cannot fairly be averred, then, that she was aware either of the words last spoken or of the dead silence by which they were followed: but certain it is that she—a homely old lady of rural prejudices but excellent heart—broke the deep silence just when it was at its deepest, and, looking savagely over her silver-mounted spectacles at a kitten practising the new gymnastics on the hearth-rug, said in a sharp voice—"Git out!—you can't fool the folks that occupies these lots, I tell you!"

I only wish that the forty word-catchers with whom I have the misfortune to be acquainted, [the forty thieves!] had been there when the stony party burst into life at the touch of the grandmother's wand. But what good would it have done them if they had, after all? I now remember that Gilfogle, although he took his departure from our circle soon after the old lady's little speech, [he was mortified about the poor kitten, probably] by no means retired to his lodgings, a sadder and a wiser man. Quite the reverse. He went over to the mansion in which the accomplished young ladies resided, and there, as we were told by them the next day, asked for the suggestive glass of water and went through the whole draw-well business entirely to his satisfaction. There was no Gorgon Medusa there to check him. The accomplished young ladies did not understand the art of petrifying themselves into lovely stalactites, and so the fell word-catcher spread himself about without let or hindrance, and made a regular night of it while he had the chance.

The word-catcher in one respect, (at least,) resembles the burglar. He invariably makes himself fully acquainted with the premises of those houses honored by him with his calls. He knows whether your well is a pump-well or a draw, and shapes his conversation accordingly. He has a mental inventory of the articles contained in every cupboard and ranged upon the kitchen dresser. There is not one of them on which he will not base some of his idiotic twists, before he is done with you. No sanctuary is safe against his attacks. I once knew a clergyman who was a word-catcher, and twisted his own words about so in the pulpit that his congregation remonstrated with him, and he was obliged to put himself upon short allowance. The last time I saw him he was on his knees before a tomb-stone, not as I at first supposed in a burst of devotion, but trying to get a twist on the word *requiescat*, which was the only one remaining legible through the moulder and moss.

There is no end to the ridiculous things that are daily said and done by the word-catcher.

DRAFTED.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

Have you heard that Rob is drafted—
  Brother Rob, who loves me well;
And to-morrow, bright and early,
  He will leave this happy dell,
Where we all have been so happy,
  Auntie Jane, and Rob, and I?
(I know I ought to give him gladly
  For his country) but I sigh.
Well I know that gallant soldiers
  Should come forward staunch and strong;
And Auntie tells me very often
  That rebellious tears are wrong;
But my mother in the churchyard
  Close by father silent lies;
And Rob alone is left to love me,
  Only Rob—below the skies.

I never told my patriot Auntie
  How I hoped some twist or mar
Might disprove our gallant soldier
  Fit for service in the war.
But six feet without a blemish,
  Falcon eye, and nerves of steel,
Honor gladly the appointment
  Of the fatal whirling wheel.

For my sake thus long he lingered,
  I have seen the hot blood come
When there sounded through the valley
  Martial notes from fife and drum.
Now that honor claims him fairly,
  I may speak no halting word,
For I know how bravely bounding
  Is the pulse within him stirred.

Ere he goes, with careful scanning
  I shall every feature trace,
Lest a marring rebel bullet—
  Pshaw!—the tears are on my face,
And ghastly things come all unbidden,
  Fatal fields where dead men lie,
Gaping wounds, and hair bedabbled,
  Silent lips, and staring eye.

* * * * * *

He has gone. I'll wander over
  Where the early posies bloom,
And the sun hangs tattered shadows
  On the well-remembered tomb.
Kneeling there, beside my mother,
  O'er the consecrated sod,
I will try to trust my brother,
  Conscript tho' he be, to God.

EXCELLENCE IS WHAT PAYS BEST.

The man who is first in his calling is pretty sure of making a fortune, no matter what his calling may be, only so it be not disreputable or criminal. Some fifteen years ago, a Kentuckian who could "beat the world at whistling," used to draw crowds, at twenty-five cents a head, to hear him whistle. He was doing a fine stroke of business, and would no doubt have laid up something handsome for a rainy day, had he not unfortunately got into the habit of "wetting his whistle" so often that he spoilt it. The fruit-grower whose grapes, apples, peaches, pears, &c., are decidedly better than anybody else's, is certain to make a fortune. Increase of excellence is paid for at rates that enable it to outstrip increase of quantity. A diamond as big as one's thumb is worth a peck or so of diminutive sparklers. A horse that can trot in 2:20 is worth a stable full of three-minute nags. The highest excellence is the thing that pays best. Let the young remember this in time, so that excellence in whatever they may have to do may become a second nature to them. This would ensure to them success, fame and fortune.

—It is seldom safe to be positive as to what can or cannot be done. The history of Fort Sumter furnishes a striking proof of this. When that fort was built, it was constructed to be *invulnerable*, and it was *then* invulnerable. But it was announced, with a great flourish, that "Sumter never could be breached"—that it not only *was* but *forever would be* invulnerable. This was, of course, sheer nonsense, as General Gillmore has proven. The "invulnerable" fort has crumbled away beneath the fire of his batteries like a pile of clay. The fact is, and it is becoming apparent to military men of the first capacity, that the only things which can with any approach to truth be called "invulnerable" are unflinching hearts guided by unerring heads.

THE SPELL.

BY MARY FORREST.

Oh, take away that mournful harp,
 And never strike its chords again!
Oh, hush thee, mother, sing no more
 That softly sweet but plaintive strain,
For, ah, my spirit's lyre hath caught
 The trembling echoes as they fell,
And, with its thrilling notes, has come
 Upon my soul a nameless spell!

'Twas ever thus. The sweetest tones
 Have saddened most my childish heart;
Even the warbled songs of birds
 Have caused the glistening tear to start.
Why is it, mother, tell me why
 Thy boy is ever doomed to sigh
When rapturous music breathes delight
 And joyous song ascends on high?

Oh, must I weep in yon bright world
 When seraphs strike their harps of gold?
Must I, alone, sit silent, sad,
 With all my soul's deep love untold?
When loud hosannas pealing rise
 And angel-wings are floating nigh,
Must this low trembling lyre of mine
 Forever an Æolian sigh?

SELF-MADE;
OR,
"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

BY MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "THE LOST HEIRESS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LXI.

ENVY.

> Well! blot him black with slander's ink,
> He stands as white as snow!
> You serve him better than you think
> And kinder than you know;
> What? is it not some credit then,
> That he provokes your blame?
> This merely, with all better men,
> Is quite a kind of fame! M. F. TUPPER.

Mr. Brudenell found Ishmael in the ante-room of the court in close conversation with a client, an elderly, care-worn woman in widow's weeds. He caught a few words of her discourse to which Ishmael appeared to be listening with sympathy.

"Yes, sir, Maine; we belong to Bangor. He went to California some years ago and made money. And he was on his way home and got as far as this city, where he was taken ill with the cholera, at his brother's house, where he died before I could get to him; leaving three hundred thousand dollars, all in California gold, which his brother refuses to give up, denying all knowledge of it. It is robbery of the widow and orphan, sir, and nothing short of that!"—she was saying.

"If this is as you state it, it would seem to be a case for a detective policeman and a criminal prosecution, rather than for an attorney and a civil suit," said Ishmael.

"So it ought to be, sir, for he deserves punishment; but I have been advised to sue him and I mean to do it, if you will take my case. But if you do take it, sir, it must be on conditions."

"Yes. What are they?"

"Why, if you do not recover the money, you will not receive any pay; but if you *do* recover the money, you will receive a very large share of it yourself, as a compensation for your services and your risk."

"I cannot take your case on these terms, madam; I cannot accept a conditional fee," said Ishmael, gently.

"Then what shall I do?" exclaimed the widow, bursting into tears. "I have no money and shall not have any until I get that! And how can I get that unless I sue for it? Or how sue for it, unless you are willing to take the risk? *Do* sir, try it! It will be no risk, after all; you will be sure to gain it!"

"It is not the risk that I object to, madam;" said Ishmael, very gently, "but it is *this*:—to make my fee out of my case would appear to me a sort of professional gambling, from which I should shrink."

"Then, heaven help me, what shall I do?" exclaimed the widow, weeping afresh.

"Do not distress yourself. I will call and see you this afternoon. And if your case is what you represent it to be, I will undertake to conduct it," said Ishmael. And in that moment he made up his mind that if he should find the widow's cause a just one, he would once more make a free offering of his services.

The new client thanked him, gave her address and departed.

Ishmael turned to go into the court-room and found himself confronted with Mr. Brudenell.

"Good morning, Mr. Worth! I see you have another client already."

"A possible one, sir," replied Ishmael, smiling with satisfaction as he shook hands with Mr. Brudenell.

"A *poor* one, you mean! Poor widows with claims always make a prey of young lawyers, who are supposed to be willing to plead for nothing, rather than not plead at all! And it is all very well as it gives the latter an opening. But *you* are not one of these briefless lawyers; you have already made your mark in the world, and so you must not permit these female forlornites that haunt the courts to consume all your time and attention."

"Sir," said Ishmael, gravely and fervently, "I owe so much to God—so much more than I can ever hope to pay, that, at least I must show my gratitude to Him by working for His poor!—Do you not think that is only right, sir?"

And Ishmael looked into the face of this stranger, whom he had seen but once before, with a singular longing for his approval.

"Yes! I do! my—I do, Mr. Worth!" replied Brudenell with emotion, as they entered the court-room together.

Late that afternoon Ishmael kept his appointment with the widow Cobham and their consultation ended in Ishmael's acceptance of her brief. Other clients also came to him and soon his hands were full of business.

As the Supreme Court had risen, and Judge Merlin had little, or no official business on hand, Ishmael's position in his office was almost a sinecure, and therefore the young man delicately hinted to his employer, the propriety of a separation between them.

"*No*, Ishmael! I cannot make up my mind to part with you yet. It is true, as you say, that there is but little to do now; but recollect that for months past there has been a great deal to do, and you have done about four times as much work for me as I was entitled to expect of you. So that now you have earned the right to stay on with me to the end of the year, without doing any work at all."

"But, sir——"

"But I won't hear a word about your leaving us just yet, Ishmael. I will hold you to your engagement, at least until the first of June, when we all return to Tanglewood; then, if you wish it, of course I will release you, as your professional duties will require your presence in the city. But while we remain in town, I will not consent to your leaving us, nor release you from your engagement," said the judge.

And Ishmael was made happy by this decision. It had been a point of honor with him, as there was so little to do, to offer to leave the judge's employment; but now that the offer had been refused, and he was held to his engagement, he was very much pleased to find himself obliged to remain under the same roof with Claudia.

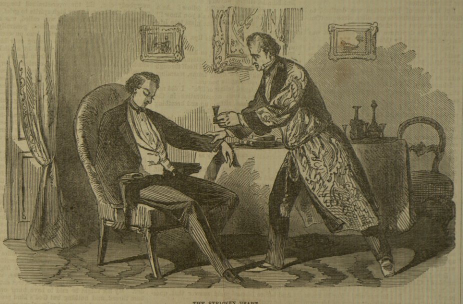
Ah! sweet and fatal intoxication of her presence! he would not willingly tear himself away from it.

Meanwhile this pleasure was but occasional and fleeting. He seldom saw Claudia except at the dinner hour.

Miss Merlin never now got up to breakfast with the family. Her life of fashionable dissipation was beginning to tell even on her youthful and vigorous constitution. Every evening she was out until a late hour, at some public ball, private party, concert, theatre, lecture-room, or some other place of amusement. The consequence was that she was always too tired to rise and breakfast with the family, whom she seldom joined until the two o'clock lunch. And at that hour Ishmael was sure to be at court, where the case of Cobham *versus* Hanley, in which Mr. Worth was counsel for the plaintiff, was going on. At the six o'clock dinner he daily met her, as I said, but that was always in public. And immediately after coffee she would go out, attended by Mrs. Middleton as chaperone and the Viscount Vincent as escort. And she would return long after Ishmael had retired to his room, so that he would not see her again until the next day at dinner. And so the days wore on.

Mr. Brudenell remained the guest of Judge Merlin. A strange affection was growing up between him and Ishmael Worth! Brudenell understood the secret of this affection; Ishmael did not. The father, otherwise childless, naturally loved the one gifted son of his youth, and loved him the more that he durst not acknowledge him. And Ishmael, in his genial nature, loved in return the stranger who showed so much affectionate interest in him. No one perceived the likeness that was said by the viscount to exist between the two except the viscount himself; and since he had seen them together, he ceased to comment upon the subject.

Reuben Gray and his family had returned home, so that Mr. Brudenell got no farther opportunity of talking with Hannah.



THE STRICKEN HEART.

The Washington season, prolonged by an extra session of Congress, was at length drawing to a close; and it was finished off with a succession of very brilliant parties. Ishmael Worth was now included in every invitation sent to the family of Judge Merlin, and in compliance with the urgent advice of the judge he accepted many of these invitations, and appeared in some of the most exclusive drawing-rooms in Washington, where his handsome person, polished manners, and distinguished talents made him welcome.

But none among these brilliant parties equalled in splendor the ball given early in the season by the Merlins.

"And since no one has been able to eclipse my ball, I will eclipse it myself by a still more splendid one—a final grand display at the end of the season, like a final grand tableau at the close of a pantomime," said Claudia.

"My dear you will ruin yourself," expostulated Mrs. Middleton.

"My aunt, I shall be a viscountess," replied Miss Merlin.

And preparations for the great party were immediately commenced. More than two hundred invitations were sent out. And the aid of the three great ministers of fashion—Vourienne, Devizac and Dureezie were called in, and each was furnished with a *carte-blanche* as to expenses. And as to squander the money of the prodigal heiress was to illustrate their own arts, they availed themselves of the privilege in the freest manner.

For a few days the house was closed to visitors, and given up to suffer the will of the decorator Vourienne and his attendant magicians, who soon contrived to transform the sober mansion of the American judge into something very like the gorgeous palace of an Oriental prince. And as if they would not be prodigal enough if left to themselves, Claudia continually interfered to instigate them to new extravagances.

Meanwhile nothing was talked of in fashionable circles but the approaching ball, and the novelties it was expected to develop.

On the morning of the day, Vourienne and his imps, having completed their fancy papering, painting and gilding, and put the finishing touches by festooning all the walls and ceilings, and wreathing all the gilded pillars, with a profusion of artificial flowers, at last evacuated the premises, just in time to allow Devizac and his army to march in, for the purpose of laying the feast. These forces held possession of the supper-room, kitchen and pantry for the rest of the evening, and prepared a supper which it would be vain to attempt to describe, since even the eloquent reporter of the "Republican Court Journal" failed to do it justice. A little later in the evening, Dureezie and his celebrated troupe arrived, armed with all the celebrated dances—waltzes, polkas, etcetera—then known, and one or two others composed expressly for this occasion.

And, when they had taken their places, Claudia and her party came down into the front drawing-room to be ready to receive the company.

On this occasion it was Miss Merlin's whim to dress with exceeding richness. She wore a robe of dazzling splendor—a fabric of the looms of India, a sort of gauze of gold, that seemed to be composed of woven sunbeams, and floated gracefully around her elegant figure and accorded well with her dark beauty. The boddice of this gorgeous dress was literally starred with diamonds. A coronet of diamonds flashed above her black ringlets, a necklace of diamonds rested upon her full bosom, and bracelets of the same encircled her rounded arms. Such a glowing, splendid, refulgent figure as she presented suggested the idea of a Mohammedan Sultana rather than that of a Christian maiden. But it was Miss Merlin's caprice upon this occasion to dazzle, bewilder and astonish.

Bee, who stood near her like a maid of honor to a queen, was dressed, with her usual simplicity and taste, in a fine white crêpe, with a single white lily on her bosom.

Mrs. Middleton, standing also with Claudia, wore a robe of silver grey.

And this pure white on one side and pale grey on the other did but heighten the effect of Claudia's magnificent costume.

The fashionable hour for assembling at evening parties was then ten o'clock. By a quarter-past ten the company began to arrive, and by eleven the rooms were quite full.

The Viscount Vincent arrived early and devoted himself to Miss Merlin, standing behind her chair like a lord in waiting.

Ishmael was also present with this group, ostensibly in attendance upon Beatrice, but really and truly waiting every turn of Claudia's countenance or conversation.

While they were all standing, grouped in this way, to receive all comers, Judge Merlin approached smiling and accompanied by an officer in the uniform of the United States army, whom he presented in these words:

"Claudia, my love, I bring you an old acquaintance—a very old acquaintance—Captain Burghe."

Claudia bowed as haughtily and distantly as it was possible to do; and then, without speaking, glanced inquiringly at her father as if to ask—"How came this person here?"

Judge Merlin replied to that mute question by saying:

"I was so lucky as to meet our young friend on the avenue to-day; he is but just arrived. I told him what was going on here this evening and begged him to waive ceremony and come to us. And he was so good as to take me at my word! Bee, my dear, don't you remember your old playmate, Alfred Burghe?" said the Judge, appealing for relief to his amiable niece.

Now, Bee was too kind-hearted to hurt any one's feelings, and yet too truthful to make professions she did not feel. She could not positively say that she was glad to see Alfred Burghe; but she could give him her hand and say:

"I hope that you are well, Mr. Burghe."

"Captain! Captain, my dear! he commands a company now! Lord Vincent permit me—Captain Burghe."

A haughty bow from the viscount and a reverential one from the captain acknowledged this presentation.

Then Mrs. Middleton kindly shook hands with the unwelcome visitor.

And finally Claudia unbent a little from her hauteur and condescended to address a few common-place remarks to him. But at length her eyes flashed around upon Ishmael standing behind Bee.

"You are acquainted with Mr. Worth, I presume, Captain Burghe?" she inquired.

"I have not that honor," said Alfred Burghe, arrogantly.

"Then I will confer it upon you!" said Claudia, very gravely. "Mr. Worth, I hope you will permit me to present to you Captain Burghe. Captain Burghe, Mr. Worth, of the Washington Bar."

Ishmael bowed with courtesy; but Alfred Burghe grew violently red in the face and with a short nod turned away.

"Captain Burghe has a bad memory, my lord!" said Claudia, turning to the viscount. "The gentleman to whom I have just presented him once saved his life at the imminent risk of his own! It is true the affair happened long ago, when they were both boys; but it seems to me that if any one had exposed himself to a death by fire to rescue me from a burning building, I should remember it to the latest day of my life."

"Pardon me, Miss Merlin. The circumstance to which you allude was beyond my control, and Mr.—a—Word's share in it without my consent; his service was, I believe, well repaid by my father; and the trouble with me is not that my memory is defective, but rather that it is too retentive. I remember the origin of——"

"*Our acquaintance with Mr. Worth!*" interrupted Claudia, turning deadly pale and speaking in the low tones of suppressed passion. "Yes, I know! there was a stopped carriage, rifled hampers, and detected thieves. There was a young gentleman who dishonored his rank, and a noble working boy who distinguished himself in that affair. I remember perfectly well the circumstances to which you refer."

"You mistake, Miss Merlin," retorted Burghe, with a hot flush upon his brow, "I do *not* refer to that boyish frolic, for it was no more! I refer to——"

"Mr. Burghe, excuse me. Mr. Worth, will you do me the favor to tell the band to strike up a quadrille. Lord Vincent, I presume they expect us to open the ball. Bee, my dear, you are engaged to Mr. Worth for this set. Be sure when he returns to come to the same set with us and be our *vis-à-vis*," said Claudia, speaking rapidly.

Before she had finished Ishmael had gone upon her errand, and the band struck up a lively quadrille. Claudia gave her hand to Lord Vincent, who led her to the head of the first set. When Ishmael returned Bee gave him her hand and told him Claudia's wish, which, of course, had all the force of a command for him, and he immediately led Bee to the place opposite Lord Vincent and Miss Merlin.

And Captain Burghe was left to bite his nails in foiled malignity.

But later in the evening he took his revenge and received his punishment.

It happened in this manner: New quadrilles were being formed. Claudia was again dancing with Lord Vincent, and they had taken their places at the head of one of the sets. Ishmael was dancing with one of the poor neglected "wall-flowers" to whom Bee had kindly introduced him, and he led his partner to a vacant place at the foot of one of the sets; he was so much engaged in trying to entertain the shy and awkward girl, that he did not observe who was their vis-à-vis, or overhear the remarks that were made.

But Claudia, who, with the viscount, was standing very near, heard and saw all. She saw *Ishmael lead his shy young partner up to the place in the set, exactly opposite to where Alfred Burghe with his partner, Miss Tourneysee, stood.* And she heard Mr. Burghe whisper to Miss Tourneysee:

"Excuse me; and permit me to lead you to a seat. The person who has just taken the place opposite to us is not a proper associate even for me, still less for you."

And she saw Miss Tourneysee's look of surprise and heard her low-toned exclamation:

"Why, it is Mr. Worth! I have danced with him often!"

"I am sorry to hear it. I hope you will take the word of an officer and a gentleman that he is *not* a respectable person, and by no means a proper acquaintance for any lady."

"But why not?"

"Pardon me. I cannot tell you why not. It is not a story fit for your ears. But I will tell your father. For I think the real position of the fellow ought to be known. In the meantime, will you take my word for the truth of what I have said, and permit me to lead you to a seat?"

"Certainly," said the young lady, trembling with distress.

"I regret exceedingly to deprive you of your dance; but you perceive that there is no other vacant place."

"Oh, don't mention it! Find me a seat."

This low-toned conversation, every word of which had been overheard by Claudia, who, though in another set, stood nearly back to back with the speaker, was entirely lost to Ishmael, who stood at the foot of the same set with him, but was at a greater distance, and was besides quite absorbed in the task of re-assuring his timid school-girl companion.

Just as Burghe turned to lead his partner away, and Ishmael, attracted by the movement, lifted his eyes to see the cause, Claudia gently drew Lord Vincent after her, and going up to the retiring couple, said:

"Miss Tourneysee, I beg your pardon; but will you and your partner do myself and Lord Vincent the favor to exchange places with us? We particularly desire to form a part of this set."

"Oh, certainly!" said the young lady, wondering, but rejoiced to find that she should not be obliged to miss the dance.

They exchanged places accordingly; but as they still stood very near together, Claudia heard him whisper to his partner:

"This evening I think I will speak to your father and some other gentlemen and enlighten them as to who this fellow really is!"

Claudia heard all this; but commanded herself. Her face was pale as marble; her lips were bloodless; but her dark eyes had the terrible gleam of suppressed but determined hatred! In such moods as hers, people have sometimes planned murder.

However, she went through all the four dances very composedly. And when they were over and Lord Vincent had led her to a seat, she sent him to fetch her a glass of water, while she kept her eye on the movements of Captain Burghe, until she saw him deposit his partner on a sofa and leave her to fetch a cream, or some such refreshment.

And then Claudia arose, drank the ice-water brought her by the viscount, set the empty glass on a stand and requested Lord Vincent to give her his arm down the room, as she wished to speak to Captain Burghe.

The viscount glanced at her in surprise, saw that her face was bloodless; but ascribed her pallor to fatigue.

Leaning on Lord Vincent's arm, she went down the whole length of the room until she paused before the sofa on which sat Miss Tourneysee and several other ladies, attended by General Tourneysee, Captain Burghe and other gentlemen.

Burghe stood in front of the sofa, facing the ladies and with his back towards Claudia, of whose approach he was entirely ignorant, as he discoursed as follows:

"Quite unfit to be received in respectable society, I assure you, General! Came of a wretchedly degraded set, the lowest of the low, upon my honor. This fellow——"

Claudia touched his shoulder with the end of her fan.

Alfred Burghe turned sharply around and confronted Miss Merlin, and on meeting her eyes grew as pale as she was herself.

"Captain Burghe," she said, modulating her voice to low and courteous tones, "you have had the misfortune to malign one of our most esteemed friends at present a member of our household. I regret this accident exceedingly, as it puts me under the painful necessity of requesting you to leave the house with as little delay as possible!"

"Miss Merlin—!—ma'am!" began the captain, crimsoning with shame and rage.

"You have heard my request, sir! I have no more to say but to wish you a very good evening," said Claudia, as with a low and sweeping courtesy she turned away.

Passing near the hall where the footmen waited, she spoke to one of them, saying:

"Powers, attend that gentleman to the front door."

All this was done so quietly that Alfred Burghe was able to slink from the room, unobserved by any one except the little group around the sofa, whom he had been entertaining with his calumnies. To them he had muttered that he would have satisfaction! That he would call Miss Merlin's father to a severe account for the impertinence of his daughter, etcetera.

But the consternation produced by these threats was soon dissipated. The band struck up an alluring waltz, and Lord Vincent claimed the hand of Beatrice, and Ishmael, smiling, radiant and unsuspicious, came in search of Miss Tourneysee, who accepted his hand for the dance without an instant's hesitation.

"Do you know"—inquired Miss Tourneysee, with a little curiosity to ascertain whether there was any mutual enmity between Burghe and Ishmael—"Do you know who that Captain Burghe is that danced the last quadrille with me?"

"Yes; he is the son of the late Commodore Burghe, who was a gallant officer, a veteran of 1812, and did good service during the last War of Independence," said Ishmael, generously, uttering not one word against his implacable foe.

Miss Tourneysee looked at him wistfully and inquired:

"Is the son as good a man as the father?"

"I have not known Captain Burghe since we were at school together."

"I do not like him. I do not think he is a gentleman," said Miss Tourneysee.

Ishmael did not reply. It was not his way to speak even deserved evil of the absent.

But Miss Tourneysee drew a mental comparison between the meanness of Alfred's conduct and the nobility of Ishmael's. And the dance succeeded the conversation.

Claudia remained sitting on the sofa beside Mrs. Middleton, until at the close of the dance, when she was rejoined by the viscount, who did not leave her again during the evening.

The early summer nights were short, and so it was near the dawn when the company separated.

The party as a whole had been the most splendid success of the season.

CHAPTER LXII.

FOILED MALICE.

> Through good report and ill report,
> The true man goes his way,
> Nor condescends to pay his court
> To what the vile may say:—
> Aye, be the scandal what they will,
> And whisper what they please,
> They do but fan his glory still
> By whistling up a breeze. M. F. TUPPER.

The family slept late next day, and the breakfast was put back to the luncheon hour, when at length they all, with one exception, assembled around the table.

"Where is Mr. Worth?" inquired the judge.

"He took a cup of coffee and went to the court-house at the usual hour, sir," returned Powers, who was setting the coffee on the table.

"Humph! that hotly contested case of Cobham versus Hanley still in progress, I suppose," said the judge.

At this moment Sam entered the breakfast room and laid a card on the table before his master.

"Eh? 'Lieutenant Springald, U. S. A.?' Who the mischief is he?" said the judge, reading the name on the card.

"The gentleman, sir, says he has called to see you on particular business," replied Sam.

"This is a pretty time to come on business! Show him up into my office, Sam."

The servant withdrew to obey.

The judge addressed himself to his breakfast and the conversation turned upon the party of the preceding evening.

"I wonder what became of Burghe? He disappeared very early in the evening," said Judge Merlin.

"I turned him out of doors," answered Claudia, coolly.

The judge set down his coffee cup and stared at his daughter.

"He deserved it, papa! And nothing on earth but my sex prevented me from giving him a thrashing as well as a discharge," said Claudia.

"What has he done?" inquired her father.

Claudia told him the whole.

"Well, my dear, you did right, though I am sorry that there should have been any necessity for dismissing him. Degenerate son of a noble father, will nothing reform him!" was the comment of the judge.

Mr. Brudenell, who was present and had heard Claudia's account, was reflecting bitterly upon the consequences of his own youthful fault of haste, visited so heavily in unjust reproach upon the head of his faultless son.

"Well!" said the judge rising from the table, "now I will go and see what the deuce is wanted of me by Lieutenant—Spring—Spring—Spring chicken! or whatever his name is!"

He went up stairs and found seated in his office, a beardless youth in uniform, who arose and saluted him, saying as he handed a folded note:

"I have the honor to be the bearer of a challenge, sir, from my friend and superior officer, Captain Burghe."

"A—WHAT?" demanded the judge, with a frown as black as a thunder cloud and a voice sharp as its clap, which made the little officer jump from his feet.

"A challenge, sir!" repeated the latter, as soon as he had composed himself.

"Why what the deuce do you mean by bringing a challenge to *me?* breaking the law under the very nose of an officer of the law?" said the judge, snatching the note and tearing it open. When he had read it he looked sternly at the messenger and said;

"Why, don't you know it is my solemn duty to have you arrested and sent to prison, for bringing me this, eh?"

"Sir"—began the little fellow, drawing his figure up, "men of honor never resort to such subterfuges, to evade the consequences of their own acts."

"Hold your tongue, child! You know nothing about what you are talking of. Men of honor are not duellists but peaceable and law-abiding citizens. Don't be frightened my brave little bantam! I won't have you arrested this time; but I will answer your heroic principal instead. Let us see again—what is it that he says?"

And the judge sat down at his writing table and once more read over the challenge.

It ran thus:

MANSION HOUSE, *Friday.*

JUDGE MERLIN: *Sir:* I have been treated with the grossest contumely, by your daughter, Miss Claudia Merlin. I demand an ample apology from the young lady, or in default of that, the satisfaction of a gentleman from yourself. In the event of the first alternative offered being chosen, my friend, Lieutenant Springald, the bearer of this, is authorized to accept in my behalf all proper apologies that may be tendered. Or in the event of the second alternative offered being chosen I must request that you will refer my friend to any friend of yours, that they may arrange together the terms of our hostile meeting.

I have the honor to be, &c., ALFRED BURGHE.

Judge Merlin smiled grimly as he laid this precious communication aside and took up his pen to reply to it.

His answer ran as follows:

WASHINGTON HOUSE, *Friday.*

CAPTAIN ALFRED BURGHE: My daughter, Miss Merlin, did perfectly right and I fully endorse her act. Therefore the first alternative offered—of making you the apology you demand is totally inadmissable; but I accept the second one of giving you the satisfaction you require. The friend to whom I refer your friend is Deputy Marshal Browning, who will be prepared to take you both in custody. And the weapons with which I shall meet you, will be the challenge that you have sent me and a warrant for your arrest. Hoping that this course may give perfect satisfaction,

I have the honor to be, &c., RANDOLPH MERLIN.

Judge Merlin carefully folded and directed this note and put it in the hands of the little lieutenant, saying pleasantly:

"There, my child! There you are! Take that to your principal."

The little fellow hesitated.

"I hope, sir, that this contains a perfectly satisfactory apology?" he said, turning it around in his fingers.

"Oh, perfectly! amply! we shall hear no more of the challenge."

"I am very glad, sir," said the little lieutenant, rising.

"Won't you have something before you go?"

The lieutenant hesitated.

"Shall I ring for the maid to bring you a slice of bread and butter and a cup of milk?"

"No, thank you, sir!" said Springald, with a look of offended dignity.

"Very well, then, you must give my respects to your papa and mamma, and ask them to let you come and play with little Bobby and Tommy Middleton! They are nice little boys!" said the judge, so very kindly that the little lieutenant, though hugely affronted, scarcely knew in what manner to resent the affront.

"Good-day, sir!" he said, with a vast assumption of dignity, as he strutted towards the door.

"Good day, my little friend. You seem an innocent little fellow enough. Therefore I hope that you will never again be led into the sinful folly of carrying a challenge to fight a duel, especially to a gray-headed chief justice."

And so saying, Judge Merlin bowed his visitor out.

And it is scarcely necessary to say that Judge Merlin heard no more of "the satisfaction of a gentleman."

The story, however, got out, and Captain Burghe and his second were so mercilessly laughed at, that they voluntarily shortened their own furlough and speedily left Washington.

The remainder of that week the house was again closed to company, during the process of dismantling the reception-rooms of their festive decorations and restoring them to their ordinarily sober aspect.

By Saturday afternoon this transformation was effected, and the household felt themselves at home again.

Early that evening Ishmael joined the family circle perfectly radiant with good news.

"What is it, Ishmael?" inquired the judge.

"Well, sir, the hard fought battle is over at length, and we have the victory! The case of Cobham *versus* Hanley is decided! The jury came into court this afternoon with a verdict for the plaintiff!"

"Good!" said the judge.

"And the widow and children get their money! I am so glad!" said Bee, who had kept herself posted up in the progress of the great suit by reading the reports in the daily papers.

"Yes, but how much money will you get, Ishmael?" inquired the judge.

"None, sir, on this case. A conditional fee that I was to make out of my case was offered me by the plaintiff in the first instance, but of course I could not speculate in justice."

"Humph! Well, it is of no use to argue with you, Ishmael. Now, there are two great cases which you have gained, and which ought to have brought you at least a thousand dollars, and which have brought you nothing!"

"Not exactly nothing, uncle; they have brought him fame," said Bee.

"Fame is all very well, but money is better," said the judge.

"The money will come also in good time, uncle; never you fear. Ishmael has placed his capital out at good interest, and with the best security."

"What do you mean, Bee?"

"'Whoso giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord.' Ishmael's services, given to the poor, are lent to the Lord," said Bee, reverently.

"Humph! humph! humph!" muttered the judge, who never ventured to carry on an argument when the Scripture was quoted against him. "Well! I suppose it is all right. And now I hear that you are counsel for that poor devil Toomey, who fell through the grating of Sarsfield's cellar, and crippled himself for life."

"Yes," said Ishmael. "I think he is entitled to heavy damages. It was criminal carelessness in Sarsfield and Company to leave their cellar grating in that unsafe condition for weeks, to the great peril of the passers-by. It was a regular trap for lives and limbs. And this poor laborer, passing over it, has fallen and lamed himself for life! And he has a large family depending upon him for support. I have laid the damages at five thousand dollars."

"Yes; but how much do *you* get?"

"Nothing. As in the other two cases, my client is not able to pay me a retaining fee, and it is against my principles to accept a contingent one."

"Humph! that makes *three* 'free, gratis, for nothing' labors! I wonder how long it will be before the money cases begin to come on?" inquired the judge, a little sarcastically.

"Oh, not very long," smiled Ishmael. "I have already received several retaining fees from clients who are able to pay, but whose cases may not came on until the next term."

"But when does poor Toomey's case come on?"

"Monday."

At that moment the door opened and Powers announced:

"Lord Vincent!"

The viscount entered the drawing-room; and Ishmael's pleasure was over for that evening.

On Monday Ishmael's third case, Toomey *versus* Sarsfield, came on. It lasted several days, and then was decided in favor of the plaintiff—Toomey receiving every dollar of the damages claimed for him by his attorney. In his gratitude the poor man would have pressed a large sum of money, even to one-fifth of his gains, upon his young counsel; but Ishmael, true to his principle of never gambling in justice, refused to take a dollar.

That week the court adjourned; and the young barrister had leisure to study and get up his cases for the next term. The extra session of Congress was also over. The Washington season was in fact at an end. And everybody was preparing to leave town.

Judge Merlin issued a proclamation that his servants should pack up all his effects, preparatory to a migration to Tanglewood; for that chains should not bind him to Washington any longer, nor wild horses draw him to Saratoga or any other place of public resort; because his very soul was sick of crowds and longed for the wilderness.

But the son of Powhattan was destined to find that circumstances are often stronger than those forces that he defied.

And so his departure from Washington was delayed for weeks by this event.

One morning the Viscount Vincent called as usual, and, after a prolonged private interview with Miss Merlin, he sent a message to Judge Merlin requesting to see him alone for a few minutes.

Ishmael was seated with Judge Merlin in the study at the moment Powers brought this message.

"Ah! 'Lord Vincent requests the honor of a private interview' with me, does he? Well! it is what I have been expecting for some days! Wonder if he doesn't think he is *conferring* an honor instead of *receiving* one? Ask him to be so good as to walk up, Powers. Ishmael, my dear boy, excuse me for dismissing you for a few minutes; but pray return to me as soon as this Lord—'Foppington'—leaves me. May Satan fly away with him, for I know he is coming to ask me for my girl!"

It was well that Ishmael happened to be sitting with his back to the window. It was well also that Judge Merlin did not look up as his young partner passed out, else would the judge have seen the haggard countenance which would have told him more eloquently than words could of the force of the blow that had fallen on Ishmael's heart.

He went up into his own little room, and sat down at his desk, and leaning his brow upon his hand struggled with the anguish that wrung his heart.

It had fallen, then! It had fallen—the crushing blow! Claudia was betrothed to the viscount! He might have been, as every one else was, prepared for this! But he was not! For he knew that Claudia was perfectly conscious of his own passionate love for her, and he knew that she loved him with almost equal fervor. It is true his heart had often been wrung with jealousy when seeing her with Lord Vincent; yet even then he had thought that her vanity only was interested in receiving the attentions of the viscount; and he had trusted in her honor that he believed would never permit her, while loving *himself*, to marry another, or even give that other serious encouragement. It is true also that he had never breathed his love to Claudia, for he knew that to do so would be an unpardonable abuse of his position in Judge Merlin's family, a flagrant breach of confidence, and a fatal piece of presumption that would ensure his final banishment from Claudia's society. So he had struggled to control his passion, seeing also that Claudia strove to conquer hers. And though no words passed between them, each knew by secret sympathy the state of the other's mind.

But lately, since his brilliant success at the bar and the glorious prospect that opened before him, he had begun to hope that Claudia, conscious of their mutual love, would wait for him only a few short years, at the end of which he would be able to offer her a position not unworthy even of Judge Merlin's daughter.

Such had been his splendid "castle in the air." But now the thunderbolt had fallen and his castle was in ruins.

Claudia, whom he had believed to be, if not perfectly faultless, yet the purest, noblest and proudest among women; Claudia, his queen, had been capable of selling herself to be the wife of an unloved man for the price of a title and a coronet—a breath and a bauble!

Claudia had struck a fatal blow, not only to his love for her, but to his honor of her; and both love and honor were in their death-throes!

Anguish is no computer of time. He might have sat there half-an-hour, or half a day, he could not have told which, when he heard the voice of his kind friend calling him.

"Ishmael! Ishmael, my lad! where are you, boy? Come to me!"

"Yes, yes, sir, I am coming," he answered, mechanically.

And like one who has fainted from torture and recovered in bewilderment, he arose and walked down to the study.

Some blind instinct led him straight to a chair that was sitting with its back to the window; into this he sank, with his face in the deep shadow.

Judge Merlin was walking up and down the floor, with signs of disturbance in his looks and manners.

A waiter with decanters of brandy and wine, and some glasses, stood upon the table. This was a very unusual thing.

"Well, Ishmael! it is done! my girl is to be a viscountess; but I do not like it; no, I do not like it!"

Ishmael was incapable of reply; but the judge continued:

"It is not only that I shall lose her; utterly lose her, for her home will be in another hemisphere, and the ocean will roll between me and my sole child—it is not altogether that—but, Ishmael, I don't like the fellow; and I never did and never can!"

Here the judge paused, poured out a glass of wine, drank it, and resumed:

"And I do not know *why* I don't like him! that is the worst of it! His rank is, of course, unexceptionable, and indeed much higher than a plain republican like myself has a right to expect in a son-in-law! And his character appears to be unquestionable! He is a good-looking, well-behaved, intelligent and well-educated young fellow enough, and so I do not know why it is that I don't like him! But I *don't* like him, and that is all about it!"

The judge sighed, ran his hands through his gray hair and continued:

"If I had any reason for this dislike; if I could find any just cause of offence in him; if I could put my hand down on any fault of his character:—I could then say to my daughter—'I object to this man for your husband upon this account,'—and then, I know that she would not marry him in direct opposition to my wishes! But you see, I cannot do anything like this, and my objection to the marriage, if I should express it, would appear to be caprice, prejudice, injustice——"

He sighed again, walked several times up and down the floor in silence and then, once more resumed his monologue:

"People will soon be congratulating me on my daughter's very splendid marriage! Congratulating me! Good Heaven, what a mockery! Congratulating me on the loss of my only child, to a foreigner, whom I half dislike and more than half suspect—though without being able to justify either feeling! What do you think, Ishmael? Is *that* a subject for congratulation?——But, Good Heaven, boy!—what is the matter with you? Are you ill?" he suddenly exclaimed, pausing before the young man and noticing for the first time, the awful pallor of his face and the deadly collapse of his form!

"Are you ill, my dear boy? speak!"

"Yes, yes, I am ill!" groaned Ishmael.

"Where? where?"

"Everywhere!"

The judge rushed to the table and poured out a glass of brandy and brought it to him.

But the young man who was habitually and totally abstinent, shook his head.

"Drink it! drink it!" said the judge, offering the glass.

But Ishmael silently waved it off.

"As a medicine, you foolish fellow! As a medicine! You are sinking, don't you know!" persisted the judge, forcing the glass into Ishmael's hand.

Ishmael then placed it to his lips and swallowed its contents.

The effect of this draught upon him, unaccustomed as he was to alcoholic stimulants, was instantaneous. The brandy diffused itself through his chilled, sinking and dying frame, warming, elevating and restoring its powers.

"This is the fabled 'elixir of life.' I did not believe there was such a restorative in the world!" said Ishmael, sitting up and breathing freely under the transient exhilaration.

"To be sure it is, my boy!" said the judge, heartily, as he took the empty glass from Ishmael's hand and replaced it on the waiter. "But what have you been doing to reduce yourself to this state?—sitting up all night over some perplexing case, as likely as not."

"No."

"But I am sure you over-work yourself. You should not do it, Ishmael! It is absurd to kill yourself for a living, you know."

"I think, Judge Merlin, that, as you are so soon about to leave Washington, and as there is so little to do in your office, I should be grateful if you would at once release me from our engagement and permit me to leave your employment," said Ishmael, who felt that it would be to him the most dreadful trial to remain in the house and meet Claudia and Vincent as betrothed lovers every day, and at last witness their marriage.

The judge looked annoyed and then asked:

"Now, Ishmael, why do you wish to leave me before the expiration of the term for which you were engaged?"

And before Ishmael could answer that question, he continued:

"You are in error as to the reasons you assign. In the first place, I am not to leave Washington so soon as I expected; as it is arranged that we shall remain here for the solemnization of the marriage, which will not take place until the first of July. And in the second place, instead of there being but little to do in the office, there will be a great deal to do—all Claudia's estate to be arranged, the viscount's affairs to be examined, marriage settlements to be executed—(I wish it was the bridegroom that was to be executed intead), letters to be written, and what not! So that you see I shall need your services very much. And besides, Ishmael, my boy, I do not wish to part with you just now, in this great trial of my life;—for it *is* a great trial to me, Ishmael, to part with my only child, to a foreigner whom I dislike and who will take her across the sea to another world. I have loved you as a son, Ishmael! And now I ask you to stand by me in this crisis—for I do not know how I shall bear it! It will be to me like giving her up to death!"

Ishmael arose and placed his hand in that of his old friend. His stately young form was shaken by agitation, as an oak tree is by a storm, as he said:

"I will remain with you, Judge Merlin! I will remain with you through this trial! But oh! you do not know! you cannot know how terrible the ordeal will be to me!"

A sudden light of revelation burst upon Judge Merlin's mind! He looked into that agonized young face, clasped that true hand and said:

"Is it so, my boy? Oh my poor boy, is it indeed so?"

"Make some excuse for me, to the family below; say that I am not well, for that indeed is true; I cannot come into the drawing room this evening!" said Ishmael.

And he hastily wrung his friend's hand and hurried from the room, for after that one touch of sympathy from Claudia's father, he felt that if he had staid another moment, he should have shamed his manhood and wept!

He hurried up into his little room, to strive in solitude and prayer, with his great sorrow.

Meanwhile the Judge took up his hat for a walk in the open air. He had not seen his daughter since he had given his consent to her betrothal. And he felt that as yet, he would not see her. He wished to subdue his own feelings of pain and regret, before meeting her with the congratulations which he wished to offer.

"After all," he said to himself, as he descended the stairs, "after all, I suppose, I should dislike any man in the world, who should come to marry Claudia; so it is not the viscount who is in fault; but I who am unreasonable!—But Ishmael! Ah, poor boy! poor boy! Heaven forgive Claudia, if she has had anything to do with this? And may Heaven comfort him for he deserves to be happy!"

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

RISING IN THE WORLD.

You should bear constantly in mind that nine tenths of us are, from the very nature and necessities of the world, born to gain our livelihood by the sweat of the brow. What reason have we, then, to presume that our children are not to do the same? If they be, as now and then one will be, endowed with extraordinary powers of mind, those extraordinary powers of mind may have an opportunity of developing themselves; and, if they never have that opportunity, the harm is not very great to us or to them. Nor does it hence follow that the descendants of laborers are always to be laborers. The path upward is steep and long, to be sure. Industry, care, skill, excellence in the present parent, lay the foundation of a rise, under more favorable circumstances, for the children. The children of these take another rise; and, by-and-by, the descendants of the present laborer become gentlemen. This is the natural progress. It is by attempting to reach the top at a single leap that so much misery is produced in the world. Society may aid in making the laborers virtuous and happy, by bringing children up to labor with steadiness, with care, and with skill; to show them how to do as many useful things as possible; to do them all in the best manner; to set them an example in industry, sobriety, cleanliness and neatness; to make all these habitual to them, so that they never shall be liable to fall into the contrary; to let them always see a good living proceeding from labor, and thus to remove from them the temptation to get at the goods of others by violent and fraudulent means, and to keep far from their minds all the inducements to hypocrisy and deceit.

A NIGHT OF HORROR.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

Some twenty or thirty years ago, before railroads had come into vogue, and the iron horses, with their long trains of freight and passengers, were dashing across the country in all directions, bringing cities to villages and villages to cities, New England was literally traversed by peddlers, who reached every nook and corner, and drove a flourishing trade among all classes. The peddler is still no *rara avis* in the Eastern States; but the changes of time have seriously interfered with the business of one class, whose coming we in boyhood used to hail with such eager delight, in the fond hope that some carefully preserved cent might be exchanged for a jews-harp, on which we were wont to play, to the satisfaction of ourself and the annoyance of everybody else, till the over-strained tongue gave out and brought our high spirits to grief.

The trunk-peddler, as he was called, was a man who always travelled on foot, generally with two tin trunks, supported, one on each side of him, by a broad strap passing over his shoulders, and kept from his limbs by a stick running across in front of him from handle to handle. In these he sometimes carried a very valuable stock of goods, of great variety, from pins and needles up to costly silks and laces, and from penny rings to fine gold watches. With something to suit almost every taste—which, from the fact that he lived cheaply, paid no rent or license, he could supply at a less price than the regular town dealer or merchant—he was generally a favorite with the fair sex wherever he went, and his arrival at the farmhouse was often regarded by the rustic family as a happy event.

These peddlers, too, from the very nature of their occupation, were generally a shrewd, intelligent class of men, quick-witted, fluent and entertaining, with whom, when their business for the day was over, and they made one of the family circle for the night, it was always profitable to pass an hour or two in conversation. They were seldom lacking in stories of both the humorous and thrilling kind; and occasionally, when they had travelled much and far, they had adventures of their own to relate, that were worthy of being preserved. To one of this class we are indebted for the strange and thrilling narration which follows:

"In all my travels, over thousands of miles of country," he said, "I was never really terrified but once, and then I confess I had a fright which I did not recover from for weeks, and which I still never recall without a secret shudder. My life might be said to have hung on a bare thread, and nothing but God's kind providence, interposed in a most miraculous manner, saved me from an awful doom.

"In the regular pursuit of my vocation, I was traveling through the state of New York, when, toward evening of one hot, sultry, summer day, I found myself passing through a long stretch of swampy woodland, along what might better have been denominated a horse-path than a road. I had taken a rather obscure by-way, in the hopes, if I found few customers, to find those who would pay well; but I had made a serious mistake, in that I had discovered none at all. In a walk of eight tedious miles, I had seen only three dwellings, and these miserable shantys, one of which was unoccupied, and the other two with ragged families who had no money for trade. At the last house I inquired the distance to the next, and was informed that four miles further on I would come to a main road, where there was an inn for travelers; and toward this I was now making my way, with the intention of putting up there for the night.

"I came in sight of the road and the inn just as the sun was setting behind a drift of clouds, that seemed to betoken the gathering of a storm. Tired and hungry as I was, with night setting in upon me in such a lonely country, I was very glad to come in sight of a place of rest, and went forward in comparatively good spirits.

"The inn was a brown stone building, two stories in height, and quite respectable looking for that region of country. As I came up to it, however, I fancied it had a certain air of gloom, which had a rather depressing effect upon my spirits; but then this, I thought, might be caused by the absence of sparkling lights and bustle and seeing it at the hour of twilight. No one met me at the door, nor did I perceive a human being in or about it till I had entered the unlighted bar-room, when a man, who was sitting back in one corner, arose and came forward, with a slight nod of salutation.

"'Are you the landlord?' I inquired.

"'I am,' was his answer.

"'I suppose I can put up with you for the night?' I said.

"'Certainly,' he answered, glancing at my trunks. 'Shall I take care of them for you?'

"'I will merely set them behind your bar till I retire for the night, and then I will take them to my room. I suppose you can give me a single apartment to myself?'

"'Oh, yes, easy enough—my house is large, and will not be crowded to-night.'

"'Have you any other guests?' I inquired, feeling, from some cause for which I could not account, strangely ill at ease.

"'There is no one here yet,' he replied, 'and it is getting rather late for the drovers, who often stop with me.'

"It was a relief to think that drovers were in the habit of putting up at the house, for that implied a certain degree of honesty in the landlord, and a consequent security for lonely travelers; and I really needed this reflection to counterbalance a strange sense of something wrong, if not absolutely wicked and dangerous.

"I informed the host that I was very tired and hungry, and wished a good supper and a good bed, and he assured me I should be provided with the best he had. He went out of the room, as he said, to give the necessary directions and get a light. He was gone some ten minutes, and returned with a candle in his hand, which he placed on the bar. I had taken a seat during his absence, and, being a little back in the shade, I now had a chance to scrutinize his features closely without being perceived in the act.

"I did not like the appearance of his countenance. His face was long and angular, with black eyes and bushy brows, and the whole expression was cold, forbidding and sinister.

"He remarked that the night was very warm and sultry, and that it was likely to be showery, and then inquired if I had come far that day and from which direction. I informed him of my tedious walk over the by-road, and unguardedly added that I did not think my day's experience would induce me to travel through that region again in a hurry. He asked where I was from, if I had seen many persons that day, if I was an entire stranger in that part of the country, and so forth and so on—to all of which I gave correct answers.

"Thus we conversed till a little bell announced supper, when he ushered me into a good-sized dining-room, and did the honors of the table, trying to make himself very agreeable. That there was somebody else in the house I had good reason to believe—for I heard steps and the rattling of dishes in an adjoining room—but the landlord himself was the only person I saw during the evening, if I except a glance at a disappearing female dress as he was in the act of lighting me to my room.

"My bed-room was small, but looked clean and neat, and contained an inviting bed, curtains of chintz at the single window, a chest of drawers, a looking-glass, a wash-stand with pitcher and bowl, a couple of chairs, and was really quite as well furnished as many an apartment in hotels of far greater pretensions. With all this I was pleased, of course; and, judging by the appearance that there was nothing wrong about an inn so properly conducted, I bolted my door, raised the window for a little fresh air, looked out and discovered the night was very still and intensely dark, undressed, blew out my light, jumped into bed, and almost immediately fell asleep.

"I was awakened by a crash of thunder, that was rolling over and shaking the house to its foundation at the moment my senses returned to me; and being rather timid about lightning, and remembering to have heard that the electric fluid would follow a current of air, and also recollecting that I had left my window open, I sprung up hastily to close it. As I did so my head barely touched some soft substance above me; but the fact produced no impression upon my excited mind at the moment. I reached the window, and for an instant stood and looked out to get a view of the approaching storm; but, as before, I could not see anything at all—all was as black as the darkness of a pit—and, as before, too, the air was perfectly still—so much so that I fancied I felt a stifling sensation. I was the more surprised at this that I thought I heard the roar of the wind and the falling of rain; and certainly there came another clap of thunder, whose preceding flash of lightning I had not perceived.

"Awed by the mystery, I hastily let down the sash and returned to the bed in a state of some trepidation; but, as I put out my hand to feel my way in, it came in contact with a mattress nearly as high as my neck from the floor. Now really terrified by a sense of some unknown danger, and half believing that the room was haunted, I clutched the mattress convulsively, and felt over and under it, and found it was separate from the bed on which I had been sleeping, *and was slowly descending!*

"Gracious God! how shall I attempt to describe that moment of horror, when I first got a comprehension of the whole diabolical plot! *a plot to murder me in my sleep!* I was walled up in a room prepared with machinery for the express purpose of murdering the unsuspecting traveler, and had only been saved from the awful fate by the report of Heaven's thunder. The window of course was only a blind to deceive, placed inside of a blank wall, which accounted for my seeing nothing from it and getting no current of air when the sash was raised, and the mattress I had hold of was arranged to be lowered by pulleys and held down by weights upon the sleeping traveler till the life should be smothered out of him. All this I now comprehended as by a sudden flash of thought, and as I stood trembling and almost paralyzed, there came a quick rattling as of cords and pulleys, and the upper bed dropped down with a force that denoted the very heavy weights upon it.

"But though left out from under it, alive, as it were, by a miracle, what was I now to do to preserve my life? As yet all was dark and no one had appeared; but I now heard voices speaking in low, hushed tones, and knew that soon the truth would be discovered, and in all probability my life attempted in some other way. What was I to do? how defend myself from the midnight murderers? I had no weapon but an ordinary clasp-knife, and what would this avail against two or more? Still I was determined not to yield my life tamely; and as in all probability every avenue of escape was barred against me, I resolved to crawl under the bed and take my chance there. Mechanically, while considering, I had felt for my clothes and drawn on my pantaloons; and now cautiously trying the door, and finding it, as I had expected, fastened on the outside, I stealthily glided under the bed, and placed myself far back, close against the wall. I had barely gained this position, when a light shone into the room from above; and looking up between the bed and wall, I saw an opening in the ceiling, about five feet by eight, through which I suppose the upper mattress had descended, and, standing on the edge of this opening, looking down, was the landlord of the inn, and beside him a tall, thin, sinister virago, who looked devilish enough to be his wife, as undoubtedly she was.

"'All right, Mag,' he said at length; 'he is quiet enough now, and if not I can soon finish him;' and with this he took the candle from her hand and leaped down upon the bed and then sprung off upon the floor. 'Now hoist away,' he continued, 'and let us get through with this job as quick as possible.'

"Again I heard the noise of ropes and pulleys, and knew the upper bed was being raised, which in another moment would disclose to the human monster the fact that my dead body was not under it. What then? Merciful God! it must be a struggle of life and death between him and me! and I was already nerving myself for the dreadful encounter, when I experienced a kind of transitory sensation of a crash and a shock.

"The next thing I remember, was finding myself exposed to the fury of the tempest—the wind howling past me, the rain beating upon me, the lightning flashing and the thunder roaring. I was still in my room, but it was all open on one side of me, and it took my bewildered senses some time to comprehend the awful fact of God's peculiar Providence.

"*The lightning had struck the portion of building I was in and thus given me freedom!*

"As soon as I fairly comprehended this, I leaped to the ground outside, escaping injury, and ran for my life. I took the main road, and ran on through the storm, as if pursued by a thousand fiends, as I sometimes fancied I was. I ran thus till daylight, when I met a stage full of passengers. I hailed the driver and told him my wonderful story. He thought me mad, but persuaded me to mount his box and go back with him. On arriving at the inn, he found a confirmation of my fearful tale.

"*The house had not only been struck, but, strange to relate, both the landlord and his wife had been killed by the bolt of Heaven, and were found dead among the ruins!*

"I subsequently had to appear before a magistrate, acting as coroner, and depose to the facts, and the jury rendered a verdict in accordance therewith.

"I got away from that fearful region as soon as I could—but to this day I have never fully recovered from the effects of that night of horror!"

ATTACHMENT OF BIRDS.

Singing birds, if we could narrowly watch them, possess the most singular attractions, and exhibit the most romantic attachment. Not a movement of their master or mistress, escapes their observation. They may be taught, easily taught, by affectionate care, to come out of the cage when called for, or to sit on the finger and sing when requested. A single movement of the head or expression of the eye will accomplish this; whilst the reward of a bit of hard boiled egg, or a morsel of loaf sugar, will cement an intimacy terminable only by death.

LOST AND FOUND.

I.
It is Christmas eve, Grandma,
A Christmas eve so bright,
And I shall hang my stocking up
For Santa Claus to-night.

II.
And won't you tell me, Grandma,
Some story quaint and rare,
About little Red Riding Hood,
Or Rosamond the fair.

III.
No, not those tales to-night, Effie,
Can I tell to thee,
For my thoughts are wandering back
To my boy lost in the sea.

IV.
It was on such a Christmas night,
Three long years ago,
That he sailed on a distant trip
In the good ship Munro.

V.
It was hard to bear, little Effie,
When the news came to me,
That the gallant ship and all her crew
Were drowned in the sea.

VI.
God willed it for the best, Effie,
I should not murmur, love,
We will meet again, not in this world,
But in the one above.

VII.
But hark! a manly step was heard,
The door flew open wide,
And the widow saw her long-lost boy
Standing by her side.

VIII.
His simple story soon was told,
How he was cast on shore,
Of a distant, lonely island,
For three years or more.

IX.
How he had hailed a vessel
That was just sailing past,
Which brought him at length to America,
To his dear home at last.

X.
And oh! it was a heartfelt sight,
When the widow knelt down,
Thanking God for her long-lost boy,
That now indeed was found.

◆

WARP AND WEFT;

OR,

THE COTTON FAMINE.

A TALE OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Thine may not be a land of flowers,
Thou simple English maid;
Its azure skies, its sunny hours,
Soon change to clouds and shade.
But fearlessly o'er mead or hill
Thy footsteps lone may tread,
And thou may'st seek the wood-flower still,
Upon its native bed.
No warrior's arm, no despot's breath,
Dooms thee to wretchedness or death.

ANN PRATT.

As John Bentley was supposed to die intestate, the captain not only claimed the estate in which the greater portion of his grandfather's fortune had been invested; but, urged by his wife and her mercenary relatives, gave instructions to continue the action to establish the validity of the settlements secured on the Manchester property. As for Gilbert Haman's will, he affected to treat it as a myth—a fraudulent scheme concocted by a too partial mother to enrich her favorite son. True, there were the awkward facts of the attested copy, Michael's murder, and the robbery to contend with; but, as his legal advisers observed, an attested copy might be disputed with far greater chance of success than the original—that under any circumstances the expenses would have to be paid out of the personal property; and their client felt an unnatural gratification in the thought of diminishing the widow's and his brother's share of that.

To overwhelm them with obloquy would be an additional triumph.

"They will be quite rich enough," observed Lady Augusta, "with the old money-scrivener's wealth."

"Quite."

"Richer than we are?"

"Considerably, my dear," replied her husband, gloomily. "Frederick inherited more than a million of money. To be sure, he has the infamy of bearing the miser's name."

His wife looked as if she would have been content to share the disgrace for a much smaller sum.

"Then he has married so wretchedly!" added the speaker; "a mere factory girl."

"Yes, there is some satisfaction in that. One can never be annoyed by meeting them in society."

"Never, my love."

"Not that I should notice them," said her ladyship.

"Certainly not. It could not be expected in *our position*."

Lady Augusta smiled at the words "our position." Although his wife, she considered her own position in society as something very distinct from her husband's. Not even the baptism of fashion could efface in him the original sin of trade. She had married for money, and clung with desperate tenacity to the price for which she sold her rank and name.

There is no doubt, had it not been for the determined opposition of Mr. Ashton, this well assorted pair would have succeeded not only in securing the estate, but in establishing the validity of the settlements. Frederick and his mother desired no addition to their wealth, and would willingly have abandoned everything, for they felt nervously anxious lest the approaching trial should draw aside the veil of a fearful mystery, and overwhelm with infamy the memory of the dead; but it was in vain they proposed a compromise; the honest manufacturer refused to listen to them.

"I will establish your rights, Mrs. Bentley," he said; "prove that the will of my old friend is not a forgery; clear my own name, as well as yours, from the infamous suspicions your eldest son has cast upon them. Once in possession of your fortune," he added, "you can act as you think fit."

"Think," urged the widow, "of the shame that may fall upon us."

"We can only be disgraced by our own actions," replied the old man. "Fools alone would hold us responsible for the crimes of others. My mind is made up. I know my duty, and will perform it."

From this determination they found it impossible to move him. And he was right; for the confidence of the dead is a sacred trust. It is both dishonest and cowardly to betray it.

Willie felt greatly puzzled to understand the absorbing interest his mother appeared to take in the affair. She could talk of nothing else. At every visit of her grand-daughter's to the cottage she questioned her upon the subject, asked what was the opinion of the lawyers, and how Mrs. Bentley bore up against the double blow—the death of her husband and the unnatural conduct of her first-born.

"Frederick is her great consolation," replied Ellen. "Never was son more devoted to a mother. But for his sustaining love, I fear she would sink under her sorrow."

"Poor thing!" murmured the old woman. "Poor thing!"

"Mrs. Bentley's great grief," continued her grand-daughter, "arises from the consciousness that she never loved Gilbert as she loved my husband."

"And very natteral, too! He wor never a son to her only in name."

"Granny! I do not quite comprehend you."

"Never behaved like one to her, gal, that's what I mean," added the widow. "Do yer think if one of my boys had treated me as the captain has treated his mother, I should ha' loved him as I do? Not a bit on it. Dear a me!" continued the speaker; "they be a long time a-comin'."

"Who are a long time in coming?" inquired Willie.

"Sam, Bessie, and the children. If she only knowed—if she only knowed."

"Knew what, mother?"

"My heart's a weary, Willie, darlin'. Don't ee talk to me. I shall die without seein' on 'em agin."

The widow Hannan pressed her lips resolutely together, as if determined not to utter another word, and commenced rocking herself to and fro in her high-backed chair—a sure sign that she was either in sorrow or in pain.

"I fear, Willie," said his wife, the first time they were alone together, "that there is something upon the mind of your mother; she is so changed of late."

"Age, my dear," replied the blind man, "age and impatience. In her simple nature, the mind, properly so called, has scarcely been wakened into existence. Affection has supplied the place of intellect. She is pining to embrace her children. Nothing more."

"Doubtless you are right," observed his wife, fearing to pain him by pressing the subject any further, but far from feeling convinced she was in error.

"I will speak with my mother in the morning," said her husband, struck by the tone of the reply; "if she has a secret, rely upon it, she will not be able to keep it from me."

The result proved that, for once, he was mistaken. The widow refused not only to unburden her mind to him, but to afford the slightest clue to the subject which pressed upon it. All he succeeded in extracting from her were a few incoherent words.

"Gin I mun speak," she muttered, "I will speak, when the time comes. Not afore; not afore!"

"Mother," exclaimed the blind man, "this sounds like mystery."

"I canna help it, Willie, darlin'."

"And mystery looks like sin."

"Sin!" repeated the old woman, sharply. "Who gave 'ee the right, lad, to judge thah mother? If I be eatin' thah bread now, I strove hard to win it for 'ee when thah wor a fatherless bairn. Maybe, it's 'cos I beant book-larnt."

"No! no! my dear, good, excellent mother! I was wrong, very wrong, to doubt you."

"My greatest sin be the love I bear my children."

"I know it," added Willie; "I know it! Forgive your poor blind boy!"

There was no resisting the last appeal. The widow Hannan threw her arms around the neck of her son, sobbing like a child, and kissing him repeatedly.

"Don't 'ee talk in that way; don't 'ee! I can't bear it; indeed, I can't! Thah wor the pride of tha' old mother's heart; and misfortun' hasn't changed it—not a bit. It ha' made thah dearer to her. But thah munna ask me any more questions, Willie, dear. I canna answer 'em; *and I won't!*"

"Tha'rt not my only child," she added. "I mun be true to others as well as to thee."

"You are right, dear mother," said the blind man; "and I am sorry that I pained you. We ought to be very happy; and yet a presentiment I cannot account for oppresses me. But let us speak of it no more. God's will be done!"

"Amen!" ejaculated the aged woman, with simple fervour. "I be a-thinkin', Willie, darlin', that it mun be done, whether we like it or no. His ways beant a bit like our ways. I don't think, with all your book-larnin', yer can tell how He do bring things about. Can thah, lad?"

Her son shook his head.

"I thought not," muttered the speaker. "I thought not!"

That same night, long after the family at the cottage had retired to rest, the widow Hannan sought the chamber of her grandson, who was in the habit of studying to a late hour. Like his father, the youth possessed talents of no common order, and Frederick and his sister had decided on sending him to one of the universities, as soon as his education should be sufficiently advanced to enable him to enter. To qualify himself, he worked early and late. It was no ordinary thirst, but a fever for knowledge that sustained him. Instead of diminishing, it increased with every step he advanced, till the mind, which might have perished for want of culture, began to expand, like a beauteous flower. Martin was of the stuff that self-made men are formed of—endowed with character, perseverance, and power. No sooner did a difficulty present itself than he grappled with it—turned it over, crushed, analysed it; and dismissed it only when he had mastered it.

"Why, granny!" exclaimed the boy, in a tone of surprise. "What brings you here? I thought you had been in bed hours since."

"I canna rest, lad; I canna rest!"

"Are you ill?"

"In my mind—in my heart; and I be come to thah to cure me. Thah needn't larf at tha' old grandmother," added his visitor. "I do mean what I do say."

"Had you not better see the doctor?" inquired Martin, greatly puzzled.

"No, lad; no. I can't abide 'em. Not but Peters the 'pottacary be a cleverish sort o' chap enough. I want 'ee to write for me."

"A prescription?"

"No, no; not that. I know exac'ly what a '*scription* mean. I want 'ee to write a letter for me," replied the widow, coaxingly. "A letter to tha' aunt Bessie; and thah mun write it word for word as I do tell it thee; and thah mun ask no questions, and promise to keep it close."

"Granny," said the youth, laughingly, "what a blessing it is I am not curious, or I should learn your secret without paying for it."

"And won't 'ee write the letter for me?" demanded his grandmother, in a tone of disappointment.

"Because it would be useless," replied Martin. "Uncle Sam, his wife, Bessie, and her children will be all here to-morrow. Ellen made me promise not to tell. She wished to surprise you. So you must not betray me."

"The Lord ha' mercy upon us!" ejaculated the widow Hannan, sinking back in her chair, overcome by the intelligence.

The paleness which overspread her features, the nervous crisping of the fingers, alarmed the youth, and he would have called for help had not an imploring look restrained him.

"I thought it would give you pleasure to hear it," he said, as he supported her head upon his arm.

"And so it do, lad; so it do!" murmured the aged woman. "It be only the surprise like. I feel just as I used to do in Tibbs' Lane, when I wor half clemmed at times. Well, well! only to think, Bessie at home ag'in. It wor sure to come to pass. I told her so."

"What was sure to come to pass, grandmother?"

"Just in time, too! just in time! But it be all the Lord's doin'."

Martin could not have looked more greatly surprised if the respectable old lady who uttered these incoherent expressions had been suddenly changed into a sphynx in his presence; morally, she already resembled one, but with a difference, as Shakspeare expresses it—there was no danger of being torn in pieces for failing to solve her riddles.

"Well, grandmother," he observed, "I suppose you understand yourself, although I cannot comprehend you."

"Ay, lad, ay; I know what I wor a sayin', well enough, and so wilt thah, one day. Good night," she added, rising suddenly from her chair.

"Good night," repeated the youth, mechanically—for he had not yet recovered from the bewilderment into which her visit had thrown him—"or, rather, good morning; for it will soon be day."

"Not a word to thah father and mother, nor to Ellen."

"Not a word to any one, if you wish me to be silent," answered her grandson.

The widow Hannan kissed him, and silently quitted the room.

It would be difficult to decide which of the two speakers slept the least during the few hours that intervened between their interview and morning. The aged woman lay awake, wondering in her mind in what disposition her daughter would return to her; she knew how deeply Bessie had been wronged—her feelings outraged—and doubted her inclination to make atonement for the wrong they had both committed.

"I cannot blame her," she thought; "I cannot blame her."

As for Martin, he lost himself in a train of conjectures, and only fell asleep after coming to the not unreasonable conclusion that the mind of his grandmother had been slightly wandering.

At an early hour after breakfast Ellen made her appearance at the cottage, in high spirits; her heart overflowing with joy at the thought of the happiness she was about to impart.

"I have come to pass the day with you—the whole day," she said, after having kissed her parents. "Frederick is in Manchester; he left home an hour since."

"So early!" observed Willie.

"He will soon return. He has gone to meet some very dear friends—friends whom you will be glad to welcome—friends whose place in your heart, dear father, has never been filled."

"My brother and Bessie!"

"My childer! my childer!" exclaimed the grandmother, greatly excited.

"They will shortly be here; an hour or two, at most," continued the visitor. "I knew it yesterday; but Frederick thought it best not to break the intelligence to you till this morning. Suspense," she added, with a faint sigh at the recollection of her own former sufferings, "is so very hard to bear."

"I cannot see my brother," murmured the blind man, "but I shall feel the warm, affectionate pressure of his hand, listen to the sounds of his honest, manly voice—hold him to my heart again."

"And thah sister," exclaimed the widow, reproachfully—"thah sister! Thah say'st nought about her. Now, I count more a seein' her than Sam. The child that has been most unfortunate is allays dearest to a mother's heart."

"Bessie is equally dear to me," replied her son, "although I named her brother first. Yes," he mentally added, "suffering purifies us all."

"This is indeed a happy day," he continued, speaking aloud, "to be marked by a white stone in the calendar. Not one must be absent; but all gathered round the hearth again."

"Where are you going, Martin?" demanded his mother, as her son was about to quit the room.

"To fetch old John," replied the youth. "Our circle would be incomplete without him. Would it not, father?"

"It would," said Willie, with a smile, pleased that the boy had divined his wishes.

After the first burst of satisfaction on hearing why he had been sent for, the musician shook his fist playfully at the messenger.

"I'll never forgi' yer, Martin, the trick yer play'd me," he said."

"What trick?"

"What trick!" repeated the visitor. "Here I am in my old coat and breeks. Not that it signifies for your uncle or Bessie—they'll be glad to see me as I am; but the rich lady he has married. What'll she think on me? *Such a lettin' down o' the family.*"

From the deep interest he had taken in the fortunes of Willie, and his long association with them, both in prosperous and evil days, the speaker really looked upon himself as one of the Hannans. With the exception of name and blood he really was so.

"Maybe," he added, "there's time to go back and change."

"Do nothing of the kind, old friend," said his friend Willie. "Those who love us will not regard whether we are dressed in frieze or broadcloth."

"Yer allays right," Willie, replied the old man, musingly. "But it was not for Sam nor his sister that I spoke, mind that."

As the time drew near, the excitement of the aged widow became almost painful; she laughed and wept by turns; one instant thanked Heaven for sparing her to see her children again, the next doubted whether they were really coming. The prospect of so much happiness appeared too great ever to be realized.

We have before observed how exquisite the sense of hearing becomes in the blind. On the present occasion, however, it was forestalled by the mother. She listened with her heart.

"I hear 'em," she exclaimed, clapping her hands wildly for joy. "I hear the sound o' wheels on the road."

"And I," said Willie, after several seconds.

"I, too," added John, in the tone of a man greatly puzzled. "Only think o' she a hearin' on it fust! Natur' be a very curious thing. I s'pose we shall never know all her secrets."

"Never!" repeated Willie; "never!"

Not another word was spoken till the long absent wanderers alighted at the door of the cottage. The mother—it was her right—was the first to receive their embrace. Sam caught her in his arms, as he used to do in his boyish days, raised her from the ground till her wrinkled face was opposite to his own, and kissed aside her tears.

"God bless thee," he said, "my dear, good mother! I told thee I should be back agen. Tha'rt not a bit changed; I shall never wear as well as thah. Don't 'ee cry so," he added, "don't 'ee cry; I can't abear to see it. Kiss me agen—and agen," he added.

"I can't help it, Sam; I can't help it," sobbed the aged woman.

"Well, I s'pose not, mother," replied her son, replacing her gently upon the floor, and wiping aside the tears which all the while had been streaming down his own manly cheeks. "See what a fool I be!"

It is impossible not to admire the tact which made the now educated, cultivated man of the world address his parent in the language once common to both. He knew her heart, its strength, its little weaknesses—knew that the change must be made to appear gradually, not to wound her susceptibility.

"Tha'rt sadly altered, Bessie, gal," observed the widow, after the first burst of feeling was over. "I ha' prayed day and night to live to see thee agen. Be them the childer? Lord, Lord!" she added, as she pressed them to her breast, "I be a happy woman this blessed day!"

Mrs. Glyde regarded her mother earnestly.

"And thah will be so too, Bessie," added her parent, in an under tone; "gin thah only bring thah mind to do what's right."

A tranquil smile broke over the features of her daughter on hearing this remark.

The meeting between the brothers proved deeply affecting. Sam struggled in vain to master his grief as he gazed upon the sightless orbs of Willie. Willie, whom he had so loved—had been accustomed to look up to—felt so proud of—helplessly, hopelessly blind: he had heard the sad tale, been familiar with it for years, but till that instant failed to realize it.

"I feel your warm tears upon my cheek," said the unfortunate man. "Calm yourself. I am not unhappy. I have still much to be grateful for. I have a wife and children who love me. It would be darkness, indeed, without them."

"I can understand that," replied Sam, "for I too am a father. There," he continued, taking the baby from the arms of Blanche, and placing it in those of his blind brother; "that is mine, Willie! mine! mine!"

And he repeated the word with a joyfulness which spoke the fulness of a grateful heart.

Willie kissed the infant, and silently pressed the speaker's hand.

"Where is your wife?" he asked.

A loving pair of arms stole gently round his neck.

Sam relieved his brother of the baby, who had not been presented to his grandmother yet, and left the speaker to make acquaintance with Blanche. The blind man passed his hand slowly over her features.

"I am sure you are good," he whispered.

"I wish to be so," answered his new relative, "and to love all who love my dear, kind husband. I scarcely feel that I am a stranger amongst you."

"You are not," said Willie; "you are not."

Whilst Bessie and her blind brother were yielding to feelings so natural after their long separation, Blanche was introduced to her mother-in-law. With exquisite tact she placed her infant in the arms of the aged woman, looked up in her face, and smiled.

"I hope you will love the mother of your grandson?" she murmured.

"Love 'ee!" exclaimed the widow. "Lord be thanked for all things! I can't help lovin' on thee, if tha'rt half as good as tha'rt pretty. Only to think," she added, turning to Ellen and her mother, "of Sam's goin' and marryin' a fine lady!"

"I am not a fine lady," replied Blanche; "and I trust you will never think me a fine lady. I am a simple, inexperienced girl, born and reared in the wilderness. I am proud, I confess; but you will forgive me that, for my pride is in my husband."

In the space of a few hours, the members of the family who now met for the first time were as well acquainted as if they had known each other for years. Ellen and Martin took greatly to the wife of Sam. The graceful simplicity of her manners speedily won their hearts.

"You have gained a treasure, uncle," whispered the former.

"I know it," replied the proud and happy husband. "I may say the same to you. Frederick is a noble fellow, and worthy to bear the honored name of my old master."

It proved indeed a happy day for all assembled at the cottage. Old John was in ecstasies. He had waited patiently till his former friends found time to recognize him, consoling himself for the delay by the reflection that blood is thicker than water; that though almost, he was not *quite one* of the family.

During the evening Blanche was requested to sing. As the last words of one of Moore's delicious melodies floated in rich harmony on the air, the blind musician beat time approvingly.

"How do you like her voice?" whispered Sam.

"Evenly balanced; good for singing, good for speaking; not a false note in it. Yer a lucky lad! When the fighting's done, if ever it be done, I'll *see* about goin' to 'Meriky myself."

"You! What for, John?"

"To find a wife, as you ha' done," answered the old man, with a chuckle. "But hold thah tongue; she be a goin' to sing agen."

A second time the voice of Blanche was heard, and the song was suited to the occasion:—

"As letters some hand has invisibly traced,
When held to the flame will steal out to the sight,
So, many a feeling that long seemed effaced,
The warmth of a meeting like this brings to light."

"That's what I call music," exclaimed Blind John.

"And poetry," added Willie—"poetry."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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THE MOTHER'S INFLUENCE.

The solid rock which turns the edge of the chisel, bears forever the impress of the leaf and the acorn received long, long since, ere it had become hardened by time and the elements. If we trace back to its fountain, the mighty torrent which fertilized the land with its copious streams, or sweeps over it with a devastating flood, we shall find it dripping in crystal drops from some mossy crevice among the distant hills; so, too, the gentle feelings and affections that enrich and adorn the heart, and the mighty passions that sweep away all the barriers of the soul and desolate society, may have sprung up in the infant bosom in the sheltered retirement of home. "I should have been an atheist," said John Randolph, "if it had not been for one recollection; and that was the memory of the time when my departed mother used to take my little hands in hers, and caused me on my knees to say, 'Our Father which art in heaven!'"

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WHAT THE HEART IS.

The heart is like a plant in the tropics, which all the year round is bearing flowers, and ripening seeds, and letting them fly. It is shaking off memories and dropping associations. The joys of last year are ripe seeds that will come up in joy again next year. Thus the heart is planting seeds in every nook and corner; and as a wind which serves to prostrate a plant is only a sower coming forth to sow its seeds, planting some of them in rocky crevices, some by river courses, some among mossy stones, some by warm hedges, and some in garden and open field, so it is with our experiences of life, that sway and bow us either with joy or sorrow. They plant everything round about us with *heart* seeds. Thus a house becomes sacred. Every room hath a memory, and a thousand of them; every door and each window is clustered with associations.

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—He who troubles himself more than he needs, grieves also more than is necessary, for the same weakness which makes him anticipate his misery, makes him enlarge it too.

A WESTERN VENDETTA.

BY J. W. WATSON.

In the summer of 1833, I was obliged to spend a few days in Memphis. It was then a considerable town, though, of course, nothing like its present size or business importance. I arrived late at night, and in the morning, sallying out to see the town, I was taken somewhat aback at observing more than half the stores unopened, though it was then after ten o'clock. It did not take me very long to arrive at the cause of this, for observing a stream of people setting westward through the main street, I questioned and was answered that "a fight's comin' off, stranger, jist down in the gulley."

I had come fresh from New York with certain civilized notions respecting duels which made the man's answer grate rather harshly upon my ear, and yet with the same morbid curiosity that makes men travel for and pay well, to see a man hanged, I determined to go out and see the fight, as I saw clearly that it bade fair to be a holiday in Memphis, and that any business I had to do might as well be deferred until its citizens had settled "the fight." I therefore joined the throng for the gulley, and walking overtook my original informant and undertook to get more knowledge from him. The fight, he told me was to be between two men, Waldron and Jones by name, each representing a large family of the respective cognomens, and each fighting to settle an old family feud that had existed for over twenty years, and had already sacrificed to it three or four members on each side; for, be it known that at the period of which I write, and even twenty years later, these family quarrels were carried out, in the south west, with all the unforgivingness and venom, of the Italian vendetta, transmitted from father to son, from brother to brother, and from kinsman to kinsman, with undying hatred. It was a duel of this description I was going to witness.

Twenty minutes walk brought me upon the ground, where I found, already, about three or four thousand persons engaged in every conceivable occupation, whiskey drinking being the most prominent. There were a few improvised tents upon the ground, where certain antiquated darkies dispensed luxuries in the shape of cold ham and corn bread, fried chickens and doughnuts, with various other vegetables, and numberless wagons, barrows, and ox carts, each carrying a keg or barrel of whiskey, either on private account or to retail at half a dime a drink. On a liberal calculation I counted the crowd as three-quarters drunk when I arrived upon the ground, and fast hurrying to make up the last quarter. The fight, as my informant stated, was to come off at ten o'clock, and as it was then nearly eleven, I made no doubt but within a few minutes I should be gratified with the smell of powder in the first act.

It would have taken shrewd guessing to have strolled over that ground and told by the talk or actions of the thousands there gathered, for what purpose they had come together. Politics, business, crops, horses, and the state of the river was discussed, washed down with copious drafts of "bald face," but never a word about the affair that had brought them upon the ground. Hour after hour slipped by, and the sun beat its hottest rays down upon the crowd, and still they held on until nearly four o'clock, when *a whisper ran about that the fight was about to come off.*

Copying the example of the thousands about me, I ranged myself in one of the parallel rows that I saw forming, leaving a space of about fifty feet between for the operations of the principals and their seconds. Every eligible tree and hillock was already taken possession of, and every standing spot that offered a fair sight of the coming entertainment. The first of the principals that made his appearance on the ground was Waldron, a tall, well built, good-looking fellow of about twenty-three. He walked nonchalantly about, shaking hands with one, laughing and chatting with another, taking a bit of tobacco with a third, until Jones made his appearance, when all hands prepared for business. Jones was a man of nearly forty, with a hard, repulsive face, and came upon the ground without noticing any one, going directly to his place and not leaving it or speaking to any one but his seconds.

The weapons were rifles, the distance sixty yards, and in a very few minutes the ground was measured and everything ready. For the first time then, that day, there was silence, each straining to hear the word and see the firing. At last it came: "Are you ready, gentlemen? One! two! three! Fire!" and the sharp crack of the rifles rang through the gulley, and the heavy thud of Waldron's body followed it. The crowd stood still for an instant, and the seconds bent over him. He was dead, shot directly through the heart!

There was a low, suppressed murmur ran over the crowd, which in a few minutes broke out into wild conversation; and then I learned that this was the third member of the Waldron family that Jones had killed within the year. I had little time to consider it, for a mighty shout went up from the crowd, and I turned to see a tall, dark lad, who could not have been over seventeen, standing in the spot where but a few moments before the murderous ball had passed through a human heart, and to hear from those about me that it was the younger brother of Waldron.

A very little time elapsed when the second command was given, "Are you ready, gentlemen? One! Two! Three! Fire!" and as the smoke cleared away I saw the younger Waldron sitting, supported by his seconds. A few minutes elapsed, and I could see there was an argument proceeding between principal and seconds. I saw them lift him to his feet, but he could not stand. Once more he was seated, and two whiskey casks were brought to prop him in a sitting posture, and it was understood there was to be another shot. I took a look at the face of Jones while this was going on, but I might as well have looked into the face of a statue.

Once more the rifles were loaded, once more the word was given, and the sharp crack answered. At that instant I had my eyes upon Jones, and I saw him start quickly, and turn suddenly toward the left, opening his mouth wide, as though gasping for air. Then he made three or four rapid steps toward the crowd, holding his rifle straight out before him, staggered and fell flat upon his face. For a moment his seconds seemed paralyzed, and then hastening to raise him, he came up with his hands clenched full of the grass where he had fallen, and his mouth filled with blood. They held him so only for an instant, for in that time the strong man's body became limp, and he dropped to the earth a dead man.

This finished the duel for that day, though there was talk that the last victim had a son, a growing lad, who was certain to take up the affair within a year, and fight it to a conclusion, he being the last member of that branch of the family of Jones.

Memphis that night was riotously noisy, and drunken, over the event of the day, as well as curiously sympathetic to hear the doctor's report on the case of young Waldron, that they might calculate closely on how long it would be before they would have another holiday over the fight of the younger Jones and the wounded man.

WAR-TIME.

BY PHŒBE CARY.

O my bird, my beautiful bird!
  Sing no more to-day;
The saddest maiden under the sun
I must be, till this weary war is done;
  For my lover has gone away.

Ah! your voice could never drop as it does
  Down through those slender bars;
If you ever had loved a soldier lad,
And he was all the friend you had,
  And was gone away to the wars.

You are quiet now! too quiet, my bird,
  To suit my restless mood;
'Tis fearful to feel the house so still,
Sing out again, till you sing your fill;
  I shall die with solitude!

Yet low! sing low, while he is gone
  To fight for the stripes and stars;
I would not hear your voice ring out,
Till it blends itself with the nation's shout,
  When my lover comes from the wars.

You must sing for us both in that blessèd day
  When I welcome my soldier boy;
For my eyes will be dim the happy tear,
And my heart will come to my lip so near,
  That I cannot speak for joy!

FOREST ADVENTURES.—No. 30.

BY COL. WALTER B. DUNLAP

OSTRICHES.

July 23d we left the Limpopo at our backs, and struck off to the northward. We were many miles to the eastward of the road usually travelled; but Artoly and Zebul both assured me that they knew the route we were taking, and that it was better than the other. Just after dinner, and while our animals were resting, three magnificent oryxes broke cover from a copse of mimosas not more than fifty yards distant. A fresh breeze was blowing, and as this copse was to the windward of us the animals had not scented us. For some moments the oryxes stood stock still, gazing upon us in evident wonder, and had not the dogs set up their startling howls they might have stood longer than they did. I was upon my feet in an instant, and passing my pipe to Dan, I ordered Jot to bring my horse without delay. Harry and Abner were both mounted before me, but they did not have the first pull at the game. My noble Morgan pleased me more and more every time I had occasion to call upon him for extra exertion. When I was fairly in the saddle, with my rifle ready, the oryxes were far out of range, and Harry and Abner were off at full speed. I wore no spurs—my horse would not suffer them—but I dropped the rein upon his neck and *asked* him to find those wild beasts. He leaped away like a hound, seeming hardly to raise himself from the ground as he bounded on. The oryxes struck an open plain, so that the chase was reduced to the simple question of speed; and I very soon made up my mind that the game was ours. The leader of the trio was a splendid old bull, and I chose him for the first mark. He led the other two by a rod or more, his long, flashing horns resting fairly upon his rump as he straightened out his nose to cut the air. I soon passed Harry and Abner, and ere long I came within easy range of the oryxes; but I did not mean to throw a shot away. They *topped a slight hill, breaking through a low growth of shrubbery, and beyond that the way was clear again. Old Morgan dashed on, flinging the sand behind him in a stream, and at length I* passed the two lagging oryxes, and came alongside of the old bull, my horse holding himself upon the fellow's flank as though he knew exactly how best to serve my purpose. It was a flying shot, but an easy one; and the oryx tumbled over with a bullet behind his shoulder.

"Good for you!" I heard Harry cry; and the report of a rifle followed.

The two oryxes which I had passed had turned in their tracks, and the result was, that Harry and Abner secured them. In a little while our after-riders were on the spot, and our game was taken back to camp, where Ben Gilroy made a second dinner on a piece of half-cooked steak while the natives were getting ready for the start.

That night we camped near a fountain of good water, and after making an excellent supper from our oryx meat, we took a turn at arrow shooting, keeping up the sport as long as we could see the target. Tickomy bore off the palm. He made his own arrows from a species of reed that grew plentifully by the old river-beds of the Kalahari district, and they were feathered and balanced artistically and accurately. At short ranges his arrow was surer than many rifles in the hands of men who call themselves good shots. I remember one occasion—I think it was on the day after we left Gichy: A buzzard had settled upon a tree about a hundred yards away, and Abner and Ben both tried their hands at shooting it. Ben fired first, and the buzzard hopped upon a higher limb without offering to fly. Abner tried his rifle next, and the bird hopped back to its former roost. At this point Tickomy suggested that he would like to try an arrow, and of course we gave him permission. His bow was long and stiff, and well fashioned for quickness of spring; and as he took his place where the riflemen had stood his bearing seemed to indicate that he was sure of his mark.

"Nonsense!" cried Ben.

"He can't shoot for buttons!" added Abner.

But Tickomy noticed them not. He drew his arrow to the head—there was a sharp twang—the buzzard spread its wings, but it was too late, for the arrow pierced it through and through, and the big bird fell dead to the ground. After that Tickomy often gave us specimens of his skill with the long bow, and old Ben soon learned that there was not much nonsense in it.

On the present occasion Tickomy had hit a bull's-eye the size of a silver dollar at a distance of fifty yards seven times in ten shots, which all must acknowledge was good shooting.

On the following morning we inspanned bright and early, and towards the middle of the forenoon we struck a broad sandy plain which Artoly informed us extended to a two days' journey. There were some verdant spots upon it, however, one of which we found towards night, where we outspanned and pitched our camp. After supper Harry bantered me about trading horses. I told him I had two that I would trade with him; but he wanted my Morgan. I intimated that I didn't think, just at that particular time, he owned property enough to buy my grey flyer.

Fitzeben, who had been listening to our conversation, suddenly, and without any apparent provocation, burst into a loud laugh. I asked him what in the world was the matter.

"O, golly!" he cried, holding his sides, "I wor t'inkin' ob a hoss trade I made once. O, you'd a' bust ef ye'd a' been dar an' seed it."

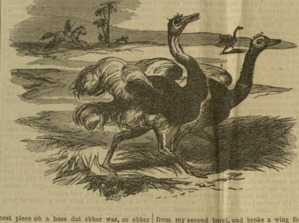
We were ready and anxious to hear an account of Fitzeben's horse-trade, and having knocked the ashes out of his pipe, he related as follows:

"Yah—ah—I'll tell ye. Once, when I lib'd up in ole Oxford, I bo't part ob a' ole t'rashin' machine dat went by hoss power. I run dat ar' machine two 'r fre' months, t'rashin' oats an' wheat, an' den de ole hoss gin clean out. He wor blind when I got him; an' when I'd done wid him, he couldn't stan' up nohow. T'inks I, hole on. I mustn't lose dis yer ole animile ef I ken help it. By golly, I'll trade him. Ole Doctor Howe libb'ed rite close to me, an' he told me 't I could make de ole animile stan' up ef I'd only put him rite away in de barn an' fill him chock full ob raw 'tators. I tried de 'speriment, an' in less 'n two or free days he could stan' up like a stiff dicky Sunday mornin'. Arter I'd got him so't he could stan' up, t'inks I to myself, I guess I'll harness de ole feller up an' try how he ken trabble. I had a ole pair ob waggin wheels, wid a seat fixed onto 'em, an' I jes' hitched de animile up, an' started out into de willage. By golly, I tell ye I didn't hab much considerunce in dat ar' hoss; but I wor intarmined to dribe him fro' de willage.

"I guess I'd drov' 'bout ten or 'leb'n rods, when who should I meet but ole Bill Woodford. By golly, ye or't 'r know dat feller. I t'ink he's de cussedest man dat ebber was. He could sell a bunch ob sticks an' ha'r, and make a man b'liebe 'twas a hoss for sartin. Wal—I met Bill Woodford, an' he war a drivin' a ole mare wid a brok'n back, an' de awfullest spavin on her hind leg ye ebber see.

"'Hello—what ye got dar, ole Fitz?' hollered Woodford.

"I hauled up, an' tole him I'd got jes' de best piece ob a hoss dat ebber was, or ebber would be.



Den says he, 'How'll ye trade wid me for dis yer 'trotter?'

"'Ye haint got no trotter,' I tole him.

"But he swore he had. He said he'd bate five hundred dollars, an' put up haff a dollar ob it rite dar, dat de ole mare could trot a mile in more 'n two minnits an' t'irty seconds. T'inks I, by squash, I don't mind so much 'bout de *trottin' as I do 'bout standin' up. Golly, he wa'n't a gwine to suck me. I axed him what war dat ar' bunch on her leg. He said it war* whar she hit it dat berry mornin' a backin' out ob de stall. Dat wa'n't noff'n. 'T would be well 'fore night.

"Den says he, 'How'll ye trade?'

"I tole him I'd trade for jes' fifty dollars. He said he'd trade ef I'd gib him ten dollars. Den I tole him I'd trade for forty dollars. Den he said he'd trade ef I'd gib him t'irty dollars. An' so we 'sputed for ebber so long, an' bym'by we offered to trade eben, an' we said 't was a barg'n.

"I onhitched my ole hoss; an' I tell ye, I war put'y keerful 'bout it, too; for I knowed he couldn't see, an' I war afeared his legs would n't hold out much longer. An' Woodford, he onhitched his hoss; an' I fo't he war mi'ty keerful, too. Howsumebber, Woodford got de ole animile dat I'd owned hitched into his wag'n, an' I got t'odder animile hitched into my ole gocart. I war berry 'tickerler to help Woodford harness up de hoss dat I'd let him hab; an' I jes' took 'spechul notis dat he war berry 'tickeler 'bout helpin' me harness de hoss he' let me hab.

"Wal—when dis had been done, t'inks I to myself, I guess de sooner I git out ob dis de better. So I jes' hops up onto my ole seat, an' takes de reins. 'Git up!' says I; an' I gib de reins a leetle bit ob a slap. Jerusalem an' Heb'nly hosts! Lord ob marcy an' regenerashun! O! ye or't 'r 'b seed dat ar' ole mare kick. Her heels cum up like lightnin'! She jes' stood dar an' kicked more'd forty-'leben times. I went out ober de back ob de cart de berry fust pop; an' in less 'n fourteen or fifty seconds more de cart was kicked all to pieces, an' de ole mare started to run. She gub one leap, an' de fust jump she made arter dat fotched her up agin a high post, an' she tumbled ober an' broke her cussed ole neck rite short off.

"I war jes' a gwine to gib Bill Woodford a piece ob my mind, but jes' den sumf'n happened dat made me hole my tongue. De ole animile dat I'd put off, jes' as Woodford war a gwine to start him up to git off out ob my way, gib one grunt, an' fell down like a bundle ob ole rotten sticks, an' when he rolled ober he broke de shafts, an' stove in de whole ob de side ob de wag'n. I fo't den dat I guessed I wouldn't say noff'n; an' I didn't. An' Bill Woodford he did't say noff'n, too. I gib a boy two cents to haul my ole cart home; an' Woodford gib anoder boy t'ree cents to git an ax to knock de ole hoss in de head. By golly, I guess dat ar' feller didn't want to trade hosses 'long wid dis chile no more. An', to tell de truf, I specs I didn't trade wid Woodford ag'in; for, ob all de 'bominashuns dat I ebber did see, I t'ink a kickin' hoss is de wust."

We laughed heartily over Fitzeben's story; and, after quizzing him awhile, we took a look at our animals and then went to bed.

On the next day, as we were marching along at an easy pace over the sand, Harry Rusk called my attention to a clump of bushes away upon our right hand. I looked, and saw something moving up and down, as though some kind of animals were browsing. I drew my rein and turned towards the spot, Harry at my side, and the others following after. When within two hundred yards of the copse four ostriches broke from the cover and bounded away over the plain, uttering cries that sounded not unlike the sharp roar of lions. These were the first ostriches we had overtaken and our zeal was afire. They were huge fellows, and as they strode away, with their wings flapping and their unearthly cries startling the air, it seemed as though no horse could overtake them; but we put after them, nevertheless, and I very soon found that old Morgan was shortening the distance materially. Harry, too, though unable to keep pace with me, was gaining on them.

Until now I had always supposed that the ostrich presented an ungainly appearance when at full speed; but I had been mistaken. The four ostriches ahead of me looked like four enormous birds flying close to the surface of the plain. Their legs were no more visible than if they had had no legs; and when we discover that at each stride the full grown ostrich covers a space of fourteen feet, we shall be ready to believe that their speed is great. As near as I could calculate—and I do not think I was far out of the way—these enormous bipeds, when at the top of their speed, made from twenty-five to thirty miles an hour; and, had they kept in a direct course, I doubt if we should have captured one of them.

In a little while the ostriches began to open the gap between us. Our horses had no wings to lift their feet out from the soft sand, so they were laboring at a great disadvantage. But the ostrich is not a wise bird. Just as I began to fear that the feathered bipeds would escape us they took a turn to the left, and we closed upon them again. I imagined that when they saw the result of their manœuvre they would preserve the direct line; but they did not. In fact, they performed almost a circle; and in the end we were not more than fifty yards off. Harry tried a shot and brought one of the birds down. I tried a shot and missed. Again we were on the chase, and very soon the three remaining ostriches turned square to the right. I let fly from my second barrel, and broke a wing for the leader of the trio; and in a moment more Harry disabled another. While Abner gave chase to the only remaining bird Harry and I overtook and despatched those which we had wounded; but not, however, without some difficulty; for, when the two ostriches found that they were overtaken, they turned upon us, and we discovered that their feet and beaks were very dangerous weapons. We killed them, *though; and that, too, without serious injury to ourselves.*

Abner did not overtake the bird he had pursued; but Ben Gilroy, who had loafed out to see the sport, chanced to find himself directly in the course of the fleeing bird, and he had presence of mind enough to shoot it, which he did successfully.

Thus we captured four ostriches, and they were very fine ones. They were very nearly of the same size, standing about eight feet high, and weighing not far from a hundred pounds each. Their plumage was rich and perfect and made a very acceptable addition to our stock of prizes.

OUR CITY CAMPS.

One could scarcely spend a pleasanter or more suggestive hour than in walking through the different parks in New York where our troops are at present stationed for the safety of the city. One glance shows that these are no holiday fellows, in bandbox trim, playing war. Their bronzed faces, and faded uniforms, tell unmistakably of service, as well as the tattered battle flags fastened to their tents. One sees there, in a very mitigated aspect, it is true, something of what "war" means. The numberless little low tents, just the length of a man's body, and no more, huddled together to make the most of a small space; the impromptu morning toilette, at that universal wash basin, "the fountain," hitherto considered exclusively the ornamental property of the goldfish and the children; the one under-garment, hastily washed out and hung on the trees to dry; the peremptory tattoo summons to bed and "reveillie;" the careless, childlike freedom of attitude in sleep, in or out of tent, according as the weather or the humor suits, regardless of curious eyes; the little group gathered round a preacher, who gives out line by line one of Watts' Hymns to be sung, while several of the soldiers, with their arms about each other's shoulders, sing as hey used to do in their New England "meeting-houses." All these things were most interesting to me, not to speak of the respectful, intelligent manner of the sons of New England, whom I saw encamped on Washington Parade Ground. Nor was the scene less impressive at night, when the tiny tents, dimly illuminated, gleamed out of the grass like fireflies. Within them one sees now a soldier, stooping over his allotted bit of candle, writing in pencil a letter home. One can "guess" what that letter is, from the honest, frank face bent over it. One feels the salvation it may have been, and will be, to the writer, amid the temptations of camp life, to know, that "at home" hearts will ache, or be glad, as he is true to his country and to himself. Farther on, a contented knot of smokers lounge on the benches; at a little distance a hand-organ is grinding out "Hail Columbia" for their amusement; while scattered at intervals under the trees are weary heads, with knapsacks for pillows, and the stars for a roof.

How I longed to sit down in those little tents, and talk with those heroes of Gettysburg about their New England homes, and the battles they had seen since they bade them farewell. How many questions I would like to have had answered, from *their* point of view, on points vital to all who love their country. Had I been a man, I should have walked straight up to them, and spoken of all these things, with a hearty shake of the hand; but being a woman, I could only use my eyes, and hold up my tormenting skirts from the damp grass and "lean confidingly" on the arm of my companion, and gaze at "the chaste moon" overhead, and *do the pretties*, all the same, as if life were no more earnest to me than to any female butterfly, who hangs enraptured over a fashion plate, or embroiders her apology for a soul, into a crooked worsted dog on a chair cover. Well—one thing I know. If I have to gnaw this file much longer, some Lunatic Asylum will have the pleasure of inscribing my name on its books; for there is not a day that I don't feel it in my feet to jump over some five-barred gate, that custom and "propriety" have set up, to limit female range within the scented clover-fields of lethargic inanity. Now that I have cleared my throat, I tell you—I want a freer range. In plain Saxon, I want to "loaf" about, and see something besides ribbons and laces. I want to be able to go out evenings alone, if the whim suits me, without being spoken to, on any legitimate and proper errand I may see fit. I would like to go to see ship-yards, and wharves, and iron-works, and station-houses, and hospitals, and jails, and penitentiaries; and if there must be riots, I want to see *them*, as well as political meetings, where people are pulled out by the head and shoulders for bad sentiments and bad manners. I know this is neither "refined" nor "lady-like," according to the present perverted sense of these words; and I know you are ready to ask, "Wouldn't I like to be drafted?" Yes, sir; and if I were, I hope I would not buy "a substitute." Wouldn't I like to stand up, and give up my seat in public meetings and conveyances to thankless women? That *would* be a bitter pill; still, sir, I'd swallow it courageously. Wouldn't I like?——oh—pshaw—I would agree to subscribe to almost anything, so that I need not lace, pin and button on so many things every morning, only to take them off every night, and hold them up every time it rained or is damp, and be frightened to death for fear some human hoof will tear them, or some human lips spit upon them. I would agree to anything a self-respecting woman might, could I only have an escape-valve for the superfluous electricity, that refuses the usual conductors of needles and thread, and new bonnets, and flies from my head to my heels, till I long to be a locomotive or a comet. Between you and me, I think the amount of it is, that I want to be taken care of, and petted as a woman, and yet have the independence and freedom of a man. Now any philosopher who will solve this social problem for me shall be entitled to my eternal gratitude. But to return to where we started; those who have not visited the parks, where our troops are now stationed, will have missed a most suggestive and instructive spectacle, and would do well to do so, without loss of time; and those who have done so will scarcely accuse me of overstating the subject, in point of interest.

FANNY FERN.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

XANTIPPE.—This correspondent says she is a married woman, and that her husband accuses her of being "a perfect Xantippe," and of destroying all his comfort by constant fault-finding and scolding. She, on the other hand, maintains that she does not scold or find fault half as much as she ought to, and wants to know "what we think about it." This is putting the question in rather a general way—so general, in fact, that we are at a loss to know what the "it," which XANTIPPE asks our opinion about, represents. If she wants to know whether we think that she does scold too much, we answer yes. When a woman "maintains that she does not scold or find fault half as much as she ought to," we think it is quite clear that she must entertain most liberal notions on that subject, and that she would not be backward in carrying them out in her daily walk and conversation. Of one thing XANTIPPE may rest assured, and that is, that if she finds fault or scolds *at all*, she does so *too much*. No good ever comes of such domestic harrowing, but it is always sure to yield a bountiful harvest of evil.

O. E.—We have repeatedly stated in the LEDGER that after a gentleman has made the acquaintance of a lady, *or been introduced to her, no matter where or under what circumstances, the rule* is that he is to wait for her to recognize him on meeting her in the street. The rules of etiquette are not applied with equal strictness, however, in all localities. In the country, or in small towns and villages, where everybody knows everybody else, and where there is no opportunity for scamps and adventurers to impose themselves on decent people to any serious extent, it is sometimes customary for the rules of etiquette to be considerably relaxed. No general rule can be laid down as to these relaxations of the rule; each person must be his or her own judge in each case as it arises. But in etiquette, as in morals, it is safe always to give the rule the benefit of all doubts, and never to do anything concerning the propriety of which you have any question.

ASPIRANT.—After graduating at the Free Academy in this city, it would be a very good plan for you to take a regular course at some of our leading colleges, if you wish to do so. One can not very well learn too much, nor can he be too thorough in his learning. When a man has got his living to earn and his fortune to make, he of course must get at it pretty early in life, and for this reason it probably is that our educational course in this country is so short and so superficial in too many cases. But when a boy is situated as you are—having abundant wealth and an eager thirst for knowledge—there is no reason why he should not pursue a course of study that would require double or treble the time requisite to enable a student to graduate at any of our colleges. By so doing, he would acquire a breadth and depth and thoroughness of knowledge and scholarship which would give him distinction even amid the *savans* of the world.

ALBEMARLE.—Your question—"Who is the greatest man that has ever lived?"—is a very old one, and one that cannot probably be answered with satisfaction to any very large class of people. Nearly every nation has its favorite "greatest man," and so has nearly every author, class and profession. And yet perhaps it would puzzle any of them to define greatness, or to give any very definite notion of what a "greatest man" is—what is his significance, or what he sums up. Take it all in all—times, places, circumstances, and all other things, considered—Moses was perhaps the greatest man that has ever been known on earth. If any one can name a greater, and give good reasons for considering any one greater, we should be pleased to hear from him.

FORTUNE.—It is doubtless true that a man should try to save a competency before he reaches the age of forty; but it is not true that if he does not do so, he never can accomplish that desirable object after that age. A man who has not laid a pretty fair foundation for a fortune—that is to say, who has not acquired a profession, or become well established in business, or in some mode, sense or manner get fairly on the track—by the time he reaches the age of forty, will as a general thing undoubtedly have a severe struggle with fortune during the rest of his life; but even *his* case need not be hopeless. Well directed industry and economy would enable even him to triumph.

O. H.—The passage to which you refer occurs in Addison's tragedy of Cato, and is as follows:

> "The soul, secured in her existence, smiles
> At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
> The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
> Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years,
> But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
> Unhurt amidst the wars of elements,
> The wrecks of matter, and the crush of worlds."

D. L.—This correspondent wishes to inform "Attentive Observer," who lately asked how much the High Bridge cost, that that structure cost $900,000.

EUSEBIUS.—Your "Vindication of Christianity" may be a very good thing, in its way, but we must decline to publish it. We do not think that Christianity needs any "vindication." A "Vindication of Paganism," or a "Vindication" of anything that cannot very well stand upon its primal merits, might have some color of necessity, but a "Vindication of Christianity" we consider altogether a work of supererogation. Christianity vindicates itself.

CARLOS.—It may be that Spain would be glad to swap Cuba for Gibraltar, had we the latter place to offer her in exchange for the former. But instead of going to war with England, as you suggest, for the purpose of wresting Gibraltar from her to buy Cuba with, would it not be a less costly operation to go to war with Spain and take Cuba out and out?

HARD UP.—There is a plenty of work in the land for the "hard up" to do. Laborers were never in such demand as now, and wages are high. So abandon your speculations and go to work "on the square." Then you may eat the wholesome fruits of industry.

CONSCRIPT.—A person who pays $300 to get clear of a draft, does not thereby become exempt for three years, or for any stated time. He may be drafted over again whenever the Government may see fit to have his name put in the wheel.

CHARLES A.—The best way to get information of your missing father would be to advertise for it, stating his name, personal appearance, &c.

HUSBAND.—You are mistaken, if you suppose that we ever favored any system of parental government in which *firmness* had no place. On the contrary, we have always insisted on the necessity of consistent firmness and the infliction of an inevitable and appropriate penalty for every wrongful or disobedient act. In framing a system of government for children, either in the family circle or at school, the main object should of course be the formation of the best possible character. In order to effect this result, the system of education adopted must be promotive of *self*-government, and not a mere engine of repression; else, when the children leave home and go out into the world, and the repressive forces are removed, they will be left without rudder, chart or compass, and will be at the mercy of their uncultivated passions and their impulses. In devising the penalties for disobedience, Nature is the best model. And what are her chief characteristics in this respect? They are *impartiality, unrelentingness* and *instantaneousness*. If any body infracts a law of nature, he at once has the penalty imposed upon him, no matter who he may be, and the penalty is always in exact proportion to the offence. We speak of infracting or breaking a law of nature, although all that is meant by such an expression is simply this, to wit: *the bringing of ones self under a law of nature in such a manner that it works him ill.* For example: a man falls from a precipice; he does not thereby violate any law of nature, but is simply brought under the law of gravitation in such a manner that bad results follow. A man eats or drinks something which injures him: in doing this he again brings himself under certain laws of nature which work him ill and give him hints more or less forcible that he is getting into dangerous paths. And now, for the application of Nature's system to the government and education of children. If a child takes hold of a hot iron, the natural penalty is at once inflicted. If it takes hold of it again, again it feels the penalty; and so on and on indefinitely. *There is never any letting up, or changing of the penalty.* And what is the result? Why, it is that children invariably learn that they must not touch hot iron with their naked hands, and they obey the inexorable decree without a murmur. But suppose that Nature was an indulgent, or lazy, or fitful parent, who sometimes inflicted the penalty on the spot, or sometimes waited a day or two, or sometimes omitted it altogether—what would then be the result? Why, children would take the risk of not only grasping hot iron at any time, but they would stick hot iron in their mouths, eyes and ears, and the result would be a race of hand-blistered, tongue-scorched and eye-bleared creatures not at all pleasant to contemplate. We have not space to extend our remarks further at this time, but the above illustration will put you on the track and you can carry it out to any extent.

Z. T. T.—"About twelve years ago," writes Z. T. T., "a respectable looking gentleman called upon my mother and informed her that an old gentleman, a bachelor, had lately died and had willed her about fifteen thousand dollars' worth of property in or near Lexington, Ky. He called a second time. My mother, however, not knowing who the deceased was, or from some other cause—probably not wishing to go to law—allowed the matter to remain without procuring any further information. She has since died; I am the only heir; and I ask you, do you think it worth inquiring after? and if so, please say how I should go about it. I am quite unskilled in legal affairs. You may have heard of similar cases; and hence the reason I appeal to you for instruction." The chances are probably very much against you. If you could ascertain the name of the old gentleman who left the legacy to your mother, you might, after seeing his will, be able to form some definite opinion as to your chances. You would of course require the assistance of a lawyer.

TROUBLED.—This correspondent says he is much annoyed by a desperate fellow, who has threatened to burn his house down, or to commit suicide on his premises in such a way as to cause him (our correspondent) to be "disgraced in the eyes of the public." These threats trouble "TROUBLED" very much, and he wants to know what he can do with the fellow. "I verily believe," he says, "that the reckless wretch would not hesitate to kill himself on my doorstep if he could cause me to be subjected to any great annoyance and disgrace by doing so." The man is either jesting with you, or else he is a fit subject for a lunatic asylum. You should complain of him before a magistrate, and have him put under the restraints which the law provides in such cases.

M. K.—The great trouble with you seems to be that you look too far off for your duties and for happiness. Perform the duty that is nearest to you at the present moment, and then the next, and then the next, and so on, and you will find the labyrinth in which you are involved changing to a plain and straight path. A man who spends his chief force in metaphysical searchings for his duty may be honest and conscientious; but we think that he who devotes himself to the *doing* of his duty as it comes along is by far the best man. It is quite probable that if you would stop thinking and go to doing you would get on track of the happiness which has so long eluded you.

C. C.—Your notion that those who are now drafted into the army, or that may hereafter volunteer, will not have so hard a time of it as the soldiers have had up to this period, is undoubtedly correct. When the war first commenced, nobody knew anything about campaigning on such a tremendous scale as the contest has necessitated, and of course the hardships of the soldiers were greatly increased by such ignorance; but now, the officers have learned their business, the army is thoroughly organized, and the new recruits will find everything prepared for them. Besides, the bulk of the fighting has undoubtedly been done.

EXMOUTH.—There is no doubt that many a man has been driven to ruin by a bad wife, as you say; nor is there any doubt that many a woman has been driven to ruin by a bad husband. Probably the books are about equally balanced as to these respects. Your argument that wives should do all they can to keep their husbands in the right path, and to keep them from getting discouraged, is a very good one; but it will apply with equal force to husbands. The fact is, the keeping of the domestic hearth bright and cheerful must be a matter of mutual concern and effort on the part of both husband and wife, or else it can not be done at all.

P. P., Portland.—The statement of the Secretary of the Navy, in the LEDGER of March 14, 1857, in regard to the application of candidates for admission to the United States Naval Academy, is all that you require. Let the member of Congress from your district make the application for you, and if it should be successful you will then receive orders from the Navy Department as to where and at what time you should present yourself for examination. We are not aware that any change in these respects has taken place since the statement of the Secretary was furnished to us.

H. P. T.—You probably know that the old adage says "what is one man's meat is another man's poison." If you like your beef half cooked, and are certain that it is better for you to eat it thus, why then eat it half cooked, and let other people take theirs well done and in peace. It is not easy to find a more detestable person than he who is always trying to force his whims about such matters upon his neighbors.

J. P. R.—We do not know under what circumstances, nor according to what regulations, the cavalry troop to which you belonged was raised, nor do we know what "$100 bounty" you refer to; and therefore we cannot say whether you are entitled to it or not. We have no recollection of having received the former letter to which you refer.

POLLY.—It is not probable that "a thorough knowledge of mathematics" would do a lady any harm, but she would have to spend the greater portion of her life in making the acquisition; and the chances are that she would have to neglect so many feminine accomplishments that nobody would want her for a wife.

SORCHE wants some one to tell him how many feet of boards it would require to cover a house that was 40 feet square, and whose height to the top of the plate was 20 feet, the roof projecting one foot over the plate, and coming to a point over the centre of the house, 15 feet above the garret floor?

E. T. R.—Call on some physician; state your wishes in relation to studying medicine, and your poverty, to him, and ask his advice. He would be almost certain to receive you kindly, and to help you all he could. Professional men, as a general thing, have warm sympathies for poor young men who wish to rise in the world.

L. M.—If the young lady's parents are determined that you shall not marry their daughter, and if she will not disobey them in such a matter, your only course is either to give her up or wait until you can conciliate the parents.

TWO BROTHERS.—Of course your sweethearts will tell each other whatever either of you tells either of them. The only way is, not to tell them anything which you would not like to have them talk over between themselves.

EDNA.—We are not yet ready to give the real name of Ishmael Worth, the hero of Mrs. Southworth's admirable story.

SOCIABLE.—No, it is not polite for ladies to be "*continually* whispering when in company with gentlemen."

**** Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*